

*Sell's Bible Study
Text Books*

*Bible Study
By Books*

A. T. Sell



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Bible Study by Books

By

HENRY T. SELL, D.D.

Author of "Bible Study Text Books"

Fleming H. Revell Company

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NEW FOREWORD—NEW EDITION

Bible Study by Books has passed through more than forty editions. It has been revised a number of times.

Another edition is called for with a new setting forth of its purpose, place, and plan.

Its success is the reflected glory of the books it has attempted to interpret.

The aim of *Bible Study by Books* is to allow each separate book to tell its own story, in its own way.

It is clearly recognized that we have, in the sixty-six Bible books, a great variety of literary forms—histories, essays, poems, letters, dramas, apocalypses, gospels—of different ages and times, written by men in all conditions of life. There are different degrees of literary merit. We must consider history as history, poetry as poetry, essays as essays, and so on.

The fact, however, that each writer, or compiler, is attempting to set forth, and make plain, some great truth is never out of mind. What is that truth, not what it ought to be, is the thing that is sought.

There have been a succession of books called "The Bible." For a good while the first five books—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy—were the only Bible. After a number of generations came what we call the Old Testament. This was all finished many years before Christ came, and was the Bible of His time. The New Testament was not written or put into its present shape—could not be—until a certain period after the events, which it relates, had passed.

It is remarkable that the Bible as we have it to-day,

with its contents thus gathered together, through so many centuries and from such diverse sources, tells such a straightforward story.

There is shown here an increasing revelation of God's purposes on this earth. There is a continued upward trend until the culmination is reached in Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Bible-books are steps—up from lower to higher things.

There are many valuable things taught besides history, philosophy, poetry, etc. These latter forms are the mediums which contain, and convey to us, the great truths about God and what He wants to do in this world.

We study the books, then, not simply to get at the times, the circumstances, the geography, the lives of the authors, together with other matters of outside interest, but the vital messages which are supreme. Unless we do this our labour is in vain. We miss the real significance of what we are after.

We here seek for light on the greatest, the oldest, the newest, and most important questions which can engage our attention.

What are some of these questions with which every Bible book deals more or less? They are not visionary. They are practical. The way in which we answer and apply them affects us in every relation of life. Who and what is God? No question is of more present importance. What is God's relation to this world; to man? Does He care for us? Can we trust Him? Every book in the Bible attempts to reassure us of God's love and care. Who and what is man? Whence does he come? Is he responsible? What is his destiny? What is his relation to God, to his fellow-man, to society, to the state, etc.? What is sin? What is its origin? What is the history of it in regard to man? What is redemption? Can man get

free from sin, if so, how? Is there personal survival of man after death?

The way in which we accept the answer to these questions, and a score like them, leads to happiness or unhappiness. It is not climate or surroundings that make or unmake us but what we believe.

Here, then, is the value of this book-by-book study of the Bible. We look at example after example of how men and nations have succeeded or failed according as they have conformed to, or departed from, the right rules of life.

Some unsettled questions, in regard to the books, have not been considered, as in the limited space at command it was found impossible to discuss them with satisfaction. In the author's "Introductory Bible Studies" will be found chapters upon "The Making of the Bible," "Manuscripts," "Versions," "Geography," etc. In his "Bible Study by Periods" will be found the combination of "The Books" into "Six Groups" and "The Why of the Groups."

This book is for use in Religious Educational Work, Teacher Training and Adult Bible Classes, Schools, Colleges, Young People's Societies, Church Mid-week Meetings, Private Study, etc. It is one of a series of twelve Bible Study Text Books, each complete in itself.

H. T. S.

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CONTENTS.

Introductory.

OLD TESTAMENT SECTION.

Ch.	No. Book.		PAGE.
1.	1.	Genesis	9
2.	2.	Exodus	15
3.	3.	Leviticus	20
4.	4.	Numbers	24
5.	5.	Deuteronomy	28
6.	6.	Joshua	31
7.	7-8.	Judges and Ruth	35
8.	9-10.	1 and 2 Samuel	40
9.	11-12.	1 and 2 Kings	47
10.	13-14.	1 and 2 Chronicles	56
11.	15-16.	Ezra and Nehemiah	61
12.	17.	Esther	68
13.	18.	Job	72
14.	19.	Psalms	77
15.	20.	Proverbs	82
16.	21.	Ecclesiastes	87
17.	22.	The Song of Solomon	90
18.	23.	Isaiah	94
19.	24-25.	Jeremiah and Lamentations	100
20.	26.	Ezekiel	107
21.	27.	Daniel	114
22.	28.	Hosea	121

CONTENTS

23.	29.	Joel	126
24.	30.	Amos	129
25.	31.	Obadiah	133
26.	32.	Jonah	135
27.	33.	Micah	138
28.	34.	Nahum	142
29.	35.	Habakkuk	145
30.	36.	Zephaniah	148
31.	37-38.	Haggai and Zechariah	151
32.	39.	Malachi	157

NEW TESTAMENT SECTION.

33.	1.	Matthew	160
34.	2.	Mark	168
35.	3.	Luke	174
36.	4.	John	182
37.	5.	Acts.	190
38.	6.	Romans	197
39.	7-8.	1 and 2 Corinthians	205
40.	9.	Galatians	212
41.	10.	Ephesians	216
42.	11.	Philippians	221
43.	12.	Colossians	226
44.	13-14.	1 and 2 Thessalonians	230
45.	15-16-17.	1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus . .	236
46.	18.	Philemon	243
47.	19.	Hebrews	246
48.	20.	James	251
49.	21-22.	1 and 2 Peter	255
50.	23-24-25.	1, 2, and 3 John	260
51.	26.	Jude	266
52.	27.	Revelation	269

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE BIBLE WRITINGS.

NAME. The word "Bible" is taken from the Greek "biblos," meaning a book. As the Bible is composed of many books it became known to the Greek Christians as "The Books" *par excellence*, which title generally had prefixed to it "holy," "divine," or "canonical." The name finally assumed the singular form, "through the growing conception that the Bible is one utterance of God rather than a multiplicity of voices speaking for Him."

AIM. We need to know, first, not only why the Bible was given to us, but, second, how.

The purpose of the Bible, and the answer to the first question, is as simple as it is great: it is to make known man's sin, God's love for man, and the supreme revelation of that love in Jesus Christ.

The answer to the second question involves painstaking study and a thorough knowledge not only of the scriptural history but also the story of the nations and peoples which are mentioned in the sacred narrative and with which it came in contact.

CHARACTER. These writings are cast in the various forms of, and are selections from, a splendid Jewish literature. As such, however, while well worthy of the most studious attention, they would never have occupied their unique place and commanded the attention of the world. It is only in their character as the record of a revelation of God that they

rise superior to all other literatures and “bring before men what God has done to make Himself and His saving purposes known, and what God-inspired men have seen in that revelation and have thought of God.”

TRUSTWORTHINESS. The Bible demands and promises are so large that men have sought the attesting of its contents as they have of no other book. The investigation has been held along two general lines:

1. The external evidences: the historical proofs, man's need of a revelation, and the authenticity and credibility of the scriptures.

2. The internal evidences: the adaptation of the Bible to the wants of humanity, the unity and purity of its teachings, the character of Christ, and the doctrine of morals taught by Christianity—which is still far in advance of the world.

The fact that this book has been able to maintain itself and to grow, in power, influence, and popularity, under the most painstaking searching of the truth of its statements, by both friends and enemies, shows the strength of its foundations.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

MEANING. The word “Testament” means covenant, but not in the sense of an agreement between two (which is the common significance), but that of an independent voluntary engagement or settlement on the part of God. “It is true that there are conditions to be fulfilled, but the idea is that God imposes these as a part of His beneficent arrangement, just as a will imposes conditions but is not a covenant in the strict sense of the term.”

WRITERS. They came from every rank and walk of life. The material used by them was what they had heard and seen, what had been given to them by God, and that which they had received upon good authority. In their compositions were embodied and embedded historical and official documents and quotations from other books—some of which have disappeared. It by no means invalidates or depreciates the work of a writer when it is shown that he lived and wrote some time after the events which he records took place, for he might have had before him authentic documents from which he freely quoted or copied; in numbers of cases where the critic has found the means of comparing the older with the later document, the writer of the later has been amply vindicated. It is quite evident that there was a distinct purpose in view on the part of the writers; they were God-guided to certain ends.

BOOKS. The Jews arranged their sacred books into three divisions:

1. The Law: G., E., L., N., D.
2. The Prophets, Earlier; J., J., 1 and 2 S., 1 and 2 K., Later; I., J., E., H., J., A., O., J., M., N., H., Z., H., Z., M.
3. Holy Writings: P., P., J., S. of S., R., L., E., E., D., N., 1 and 2 C.

In our English Bible the books have a different arrangement, also in three divisions:

1. Historical: G., E., L., N., D., J., J., 1 and 2 S., 1 and 2 K., 1 and 2 C., E., N., E.
2. Poetical: J., P., P., E., S. of S.
3. Prophetical: I., J., L., E., D., H., J., A., O., J., M., N., H., Z., H., Z., M.

The latter order of the books is taken practically

from the Septuagint, a translation of the Hebrew into the Greek, made in Alexandria—3d to the 2d century B.C.—where the arrangement is mainly determined by the consideration of the contents of the books.

CANON means pattern or rule. It may be roughly defined as the list of books authoritatively declared or universally received as the Holy Scriptures, which term suggests in some peculiar sense a divine origin and the distinguishing of the Bible books from all others.

The writings of the Old Testament, which cover a period of about one thousand years—from Moses to Malachi—were not all gathered up at one time and placed in the canon, but the process was a gradual one. It is quite clear, however, that all these books were well known long before the time of Christ. Josephus speaks of them as well known in his day. A translation—the Septuagint, already referred to—from the Hebrew to the Greek was made in the 3d to the 2d century B.C. in Alexandria.

In the 5th century B.C., in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Law was read to the people as the Law of God (Nehemiah 8–9 chs.). In the 7th century B.C. the Book of the Law, as having divine authority, was read to the people, having been found by Hilkiah in the House of the Lord (2 Kings 22:8). The Book of the Law was put in the side of the Ark of the Covenant (Deuteronomy 31:25, 26). Moses was commanded to write for a memorial in a book (Exodus 17:14), and the ancient law codes, which were preserved in Exodus 20–23 and 34:10–26, had certainly received their divine sanction at a very early date.

During and after the Exile there was great literary activity amongst the Jews and studious and painstaking attention paid to the arrangement and editing of their holy writings. Ezra and his able co-laborers and successors had much to do with the editing of the sacred books. The canonical process was practically called completed between 300 and 150 B.C.

Many of the books, however, were regarded and used as having divine authority many years before there was any canonical arrangement of them.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

PLACE. "The New Testament forms the second and concluding portion of the sacred writings which embody the Divine revelation communicated in the line of Jewish history."

CONTENTS. There are 27 books: 5 narrative, 21 letters, and 1 apocalypse. They relate the story of Jesus Christ, His birth, life on earth, teaching, works of power, suffering, death, and resurrection. They also give an account of the work of His disciples in preaching His gospel, and the story of the founding of and instructions and admonitions to the first churches. The central figure is Jesus Christ.

These writings, it should be remembered, did not create the Christ or the Christian religion, but are accounts of His work and its propagation.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION. The lines of testimony are numerous and strong; only a few, however, can be mentioned here.

1. Eye-witnesses, or those who saw Christ. Before any of the books of the New Testament were written the appeal was made to the well-known facts

about Christ. Peter, John, and Stephen in their preaching call the attention of those whom they address to the things they had seen and heard. Little need was felt for books in that first period, when books were so difficult to make and the evidence was so clear and close at hand (Acts 2-7 chs.). Jesus had given command in regard to this witnessing (Acts 1:8) for Him. This first or oral period lasted for some years.

2. Ear-witnesses, or those who heard the declarations of those who had been with Christ. There were multitudes of persons who listened to the testimony of those who had seen Christ, and, convinced of the truth of their statements, went forth themselves to spread the good news. The gospel was carried in this way to many cities. The need for written testimony was not yet felt. Papias, a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John the Apostle, and who also probably knew John, expressed the general feeling—even in the presence of the New Testament books—when he wrote: “If then any one came who had been a follower of the elders I would question him about the words of the elders, what, by their report, Andrew or what Peter had said, or what had been said by Philip or Thomas, or by James, or by Matthew, or by any other of the disciples of the Lord, . . . for I did not think I could get so much profit from the contents of books as from the utterances of the living and abiding voice.”

3. Book-witnesses. The books of the New Testament began to be written about 50 A.D., when Christianity began to take wider and wider territorial ranges. There was the necessity of communicating

by letter with the churches, separated by long distances, and it was also seen, if the gospel story was to be preserved in its purity, that it must be written down by those who were the most competent. Irenæus, also a disciple of Polycarp, writes of this process: "Matthew then published his gospel among the Hebrews in their own language. . . . Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also transmitted to us in writing those things which Peter had preached; and Luke, the attendant of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel which Paul had declared. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also reclined on His bosom, published his gospel while staying at Ephesus in Asia."

The Epistles of Paul and other books were called out by the necessities of the churches.

The books of the New Testament were circulated separately for many years, and also looked upon as canonical, before they were gathered into one collection, as we now have them. Many—and probably most—of the New Testament writings were composed before 70 A.D.

4. The witnesses of the Sub-Apostolic Age, i.e., "the generation immediately following that of the Apostles." We here find a number of able writers who corroborate in their works the facts set down in the New Testament books. Among these men are Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna. Two of these writers, and probably all three, had known apostles and held positions of eminence in the church at the close of the first and near the beginning of the second century. After the passing of these men came others, in the next age, like Tertullian of Carthage, Irenæus of Lyons, and

Clement of Alexandria, men of great ability, who likewise testify to the truthfulness of and give numerous quotations from the New Testament writings.

5. The great effects, in the Roman Empire, which followed the witnessing to the Christ show the solid foundation upon which the written records rest. Sober Roman writers like Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny give us word-pictures of the Christ, and state the fact that His followers regarded Him as a God. So fast did Christianity grow that as early as 64 A.D. Nero began a great persecution against the Christians; this conflict of Christianity with heathenism never ceased until Christ had conquered the Roman Empire and the Emperor Constantine gave in his adhesion to it.

MANUSCRIPTS. The three now considered the most important are: 1. Codex Sinaiticus, kept in the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg, and thought to have been made by order of the Emperor Constantine. 2. Codex Vaticanus, kept in the Vatican Library at Rome. 3. Codex Alexandrinus, kept in the British Museum. It is a significant fact that these three manuscripts were not available and not used when the King James translation of our Bible was made. Yet there is no essential difference between them and the later manuscripts.

I.

GENESIS.

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

CONTENTS: "The book of Genesis has an importance and interest to which no other document of antiquity can pretend. It embraces the world." Its God is the God of all men. The special covenant made with Abraham and the blessing pronounced upon him and his family are only that in him all the families of the earth may be blessed. The great questions of the beginning of the world, man, sin and redemption here find simple and rational answers.

1. *Origin of the World*: Gen. 1: 1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This plain and sufficient reason for the cause of creation has only to be compared with the other cosmogonies of the ancients to show its superiority. Modern science has no word beyond this.

2. *Origin of Man*: Gen. 1: 26-27, 2: 7. Many different theories have been propounded; but this narrative touches the main point; man as we find him is the product of God's hand.

3. *Origin of Sin*: Gen. ch. 2-3. We are wholly at a loss to understand how sin came into the world and to reconcile the fact of sin with a good God, until

we read this account of the introduction of evil through man's willful disobedience of a reasonable and righteous commandment. Sin came into the world and is kept in the world through man's unlawful desires.

4. *Origin of Redemption:* Ch. 3:15, compare John 3:16. Man is obliged whenever he sins to come under the curse of a broken law. But even with the curse there is a manifestation of God's compassion and love. "A Deliverer is promised who shall bruise the tempter's head."

God wishes to save man to reconcile him to Himself; this leads to the whole action of the book.

God is revealed as Creator, Preserver, Law-giver, Judge and Merciful Sovereign.

Principal Persons: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Leading Events: The creation of the world; Creation of man; Beginning of sin; Fall of man; Promise of a Deliverer; Growth of sin; The flood; The confusion of tongues and dispersion of mankind over the earth; The calling of Abraham and the Covenant God made with him; The renewal of the covenant with the descendants of Abraham; The Beginning of the chosen family and nation.

PURPOSE.

To show how God began to give a Divine Religion to mankind. In doing this it was necessary to describe man's primeval condition and his

lapse into sin which rendered salvation indispensable. The author is writing a religious history.

PLAN.

Genesis is the introduction to a larger whole known as the Hexateuch, which embraces the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. In the Hexateuch we have related the history of Israel from the remote past up to the settlement in Canaan.

Genesis has a distinct plan of its own. Besides the natural divisions given in the analysis it may be separated into two parts.

1. The Early History of the World or Mankind; Man's place in Creation is given; The presence of evil is explained; The beginning of civilization is shown; The dispersion of mankind and separate nations are accounted for; Israel's place amongst the peoples of the earth is determined. Ch. 1-11.

2. History of the Patriarchs or the fathers of the Jewish Race. From the calling of Abraham to the death of Jacob in Egypt. Ch. 12-50.

RELIGIOUS VALUE.

This book cannot be overestimated from a religious standpoint. The fact of a Creator is the fundamental teaching of its cosmogony. God, one God, is here clearly distinguished from the host of heathen gods. He is over and above matter. There is no deification of created things; everything in the universe was created by God and is subject to Him. He is represented as hating sin and yet as

caring for and loving men. He is the God not only of the Jews but of all races of men. These conceptions of the Deity are widely different from those of the heathen who believed in millions of gods and deified the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Sea and Trees and Beasts of the earth.

SCIENTIFIC VALUE.

Genesis does not seek to explain exactly how all things came into being. The book of nature is open and this narrative does not anticipate, is not designed to anticipate that full knowledge which can come only through study and investigation. But there are here certain broad indications of the great plan after which the world was constructed: 1. There was a beginning. 2. There was a Creator. 3. Things did not come by chance. 4. There was an order of development. 5. Man is the chief work of creation, for which all else was brought into being. 6. There was an orderly progression in the plan of creation: from the less to the greater; from the simple to the more complex.

ANALYSIS.

After the introduction the book of Genesis is divided into ten parts or genealogical tables; each division is marked by the recurring formula: "These are the generations of."

INTRODUCTION. Ch. 1: 1-2: 3. Creation of the heavens, the earth and man.

I. THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. 2: 4 to 4: 26. (This may also include the Introduction.)

(a) A second account of the beginning of man upon the earth. 2: 4-25.

(b) The entrance of sin and fall of man. The promise of a Deliverer. Ch. 3.

(c) The growth of sin. Cain kills Abel his brother. The growth of inventions. The birth of Seth to take the place of Abel. Ch. 4.

II. THE GENERATIONS OF ADAM. 5:1-6:8.

(a) The narrative begins with Adam and gives the line of his descendants through Seth to Noah. Ch. 5.

(b) The increase of wickedness on the earth. 6: 1-8.

III. THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH. 6:9-9:29.

(a) Noah and his three sons; Shem, Ham and Japheth. 6: 9-10.

(b) The corruption of men. The Deluge. The Ark. Noah builds an altar and offers sacrifices after the flood. 6:11-8:22.

(c) A new Covenant is made by God with mankind in the person of Noah. 9:1-29.

IV. THE GENERATIONS OF THE SONS OF NOAH. 10:1-11:9.

(a) The Sons of Noah and the different nations which sprang from them. 10:1-32.

(b) The confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel and the dispersion of mankind over the earth. 11:1-9.

V. THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM. 11:10-26.

The line of Shem is narrowed down to the promised seed: to Terah the father of Abram.

VI. THE GENERATIONS OF TERAH. 11:27-25:11.

The line of Terah: the history of Abraham and his descendants ending with the death of Abraham.

(a) The call of Abraham. The promise made to him. Ch. 12. Abraham and Lot. Ch. 13.

(b) Abraham is blessed by Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Ch. 14.

(c) God makes a covenant with Abraham. Ch. 15-16. The covenant is renewed. Ch. 17-18.

(d) Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness. Ch. 19. Abraham lives at Gerar. Ch. 20.

(e) Isaac, the child of promise is born. The youth and marriage of Isaac to Rebekah. Ch. 21, 22 and 24. Ch. 23 has an account of the death of Sarah.

(f) Death of Abraham. 25: 1-11.

VII. THE GENERATIONS OF ISHMAEL. 25: 12-25: 18.

Ishmael (not being in the line of the promise) and his descendants are dismissed in seven verses.

VIII. THE GENERATIONS OF ISAAC. 25: 19-35: 29.

The fortunes of Isaac continued until the time of his death.

(a) Birth of Esau and Jacob. 25: 19-34.

(b) The covenant which God made with Abraham is renewed with Isaac. Ch. 26.

(c) Jacob obtains the blessing from Isaac. The marriage and fortunes of Jacob. Ch. 27-34.

(d) God enters into covenant with Jacob. Death of Isaac. 35: 1-29.

IX. THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU. 36: 1-8; 36: 9-37: 1.

Esau (not being in the line of the promise) and his descendants are dismissed in one chapter.

X. THE GENERATIONS OF JACOB. 37: 2-50: 26.

This division is principally occupied with the story of Joseph and his brethren, sons of Jacob: it shows how the chosen family went down into Egypt; it ends with the death of Jacob.

II. EXODUS.

THE MAKING OF A NATION.

CONTENTS: The book of Genesis ends with the death of Joseph. Exodus begins with an account of the cruel bondage of the Israelites in Egypt; shows the manner of their deliverance and closes with the erection of the Tabernacle by Moses in the second year of the exodus.

PURPOSE.

The object is not to give the history of this change of condition from slaves to God's free men simply as a history but to "give an account of the first stage in the fulfillment of the promises made by God to the Patriarchs with reference to the place and growth of the Israelites"; we have here no longer biographies and family records but the beginning of the story of a chosen nation and in place of a revelation from time to time to individuals we have provision for a continuous communication of the Divine will to the whole people by means of divinely appointed leaders."

SCOPE.

This book is a great turning point in Old Testament history. The family becomes a nation and the nation

is set apart for a peculiar work; it is to be "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation" (19:6.) The Patriarchal dispensation ends: the Law begins.

God is revealed as the God of the whole world and supreme over nature; He shows His power over Pharaoh as well as over the forces of the earth; in virtue of this Sovereignty He takes Israel as His peculiar people.

DIVISIONS.

Besides the scheme given in the analysis, this book may be divided into two parts:

1. *Historical or Narrative*: Ch. 1-19.

(a) Preparation for the Deliverance: The afflicted state of the Israelites; the birth, education and flight of Moses; his call of God to be the deliverer of his people and his return to Egypt. He is at first unsuccessful in his efforts before Pharaoh; God gives him power to work miracles; he returns and Pharaoh is compelled to let the children of Israel go. 1: 1-12: 36.

(b) The Deliverance and march to Sinai. The principal events are: The institution of the Passover; the march to and passage through the Red Sea; the destruction of Pharaoh's host; the song of triumph; the miraculous supply of water and food; the arrival at Sinai. 12: 37-19: 25.

2. *Legislative*. 20: 1-40: 38.

We have here the conditions of the covenant by which the Israelites are to become a holy nation. The Theocracy is solemnly inaugurated; command.

ments and regulations are given for their Social, Political and Religious life. Directions are given for the establishment of a Sanctuary and Priesthood.

THE LAWS REVEALED IN EXODUS.

1. "*The Moral Law* as revealing righteousness and sin; the ten commandments."
2. "*The Ceremonial Law* as revealing redemption from sin and its consequences."
3. "*The Civil Law* as cementing together a nation which would furnish a place of safety for the development of the Divine Religion."

HISTORICAL VALUE.

Modern research and excavations in Egypt have done much to confirm the credibility of this book. It is beyond dispute that there were tribes in the Delta "of kindred origin and language" to the Israelites. When Abraham went into Egypt the Hyksos or Shepherd kings were in power and he had no difficulty in entering into friendly relations with the people. It is quite "well agreed that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the oppression and Merenptah II the Pharaoh of the Exodus." The explorations at Tell-el-Maskhutih have revealed to us Pithom, in Succoth, which was constructed with extensive store chambers (1: 11) by Rameses II. We now know that the plagues of flies, lice, frogs, etc. were intensified forms of common visitations.

The Art of Writing: Until quite recently, it was asserted with confidence, that the art of writing was

unknown in the time of Moses; but the excavations at Tel-el-Amarna, the royal city of Khun-Aten reveal letters and documents written before the Exodus; they are important as tending to confirm the state of affairs which the Bible asserts existed.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE NATION CALLED. Ch. 1-11. The Israelites would have remained in Egypt in a condition of bondage had not God called them out to serve Him.

In this section we have related the events which led to their deliverance.

(a) "The names of the children of Israel who came into Egypt" with Jacob. The great increase of the people. 1: 1-8.

(b) The Preparation for the Exodus: The accession of the new king who cruelly oppressed the Israelites. 1: 9-22. The birth of Moses. Ch. 2.

(c) The Leader for the exodus. God reveals himself to Moses in the burning bush and shows him what He would have him do. Ch. 3. Moses returns to Egypt and in the name of God demands the release of his people. Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the Israelites go and increases their tasks. 4: 1-6: 2.

(d) The God of the Exodus. Moses is bidden to explain to the people who it is that is bringing them out of cruel bondage and why. 6: 3-28.

(e) Power is given Moses to work miracles for the Exodus. The plagues of: the River Nile turned into blood; Frogs; Lice; Flies; Murrain; Boils and Blains; Hail; Locusts; Darkness. 6: 29-11: 10.

II. THE NATION CONSTITUTED. 12: 1-19: 2. The events that took place from the departure from Egypt to the arrival at Sinai. The Israelites now stand together, they have common interests.

(a) The people of Israel are bound to God by a new rite: The Institution of the Passover. They are redeemed and set apart as a chosen nation by the blood of a Lamb. (Looking forward

to redemption by Christ, the Lamb of God.) The Egyptians who are not protected have the first born slain throughout their land. Pharaoh consents to the release of Israel. 12: 1-13: 17.

(b) The people are led by God through all their difficulties to Sinai. "And the Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; to go by day and night." He provides food for them. Pharaoh with his army pursuing the children of Israel has his host drowned in the sea. 13: 18-14: 31.

(c) The Song of Rejoicing over the deliverance from Egypt. 15: 1-21.

(d) God provides for the wants of His people. 15: 22-19: 2.

III. THE NATION CONSECRATED. 19: 3-40: 38. The action in this section is all at Mt. Sinai.

(a) The Israelites are shown that they are a people set apart, to do a peculiar work; to be the depository of a Divine Religion which is to benefit all mankind; for this purpose their laws and regulations are different from all other nations; they are to be a "Holy Nation;" they enter into covenant with God. Ch. 19.

(b) The Theocracy is solemnly established by:

1. The Giving of the Ten commandments. 20: 1-22.
2. The Giving of the Book of the Covenant containing special laws for ruling the social life and religious observances. 20: 23-23: 33.
3. The acceptance of the covenant by the people. 24: 1-12.
4. The giving of directions, for building the Tabernacle, to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and the consecration of the Priesthood. God gave to Moses "two tables of testimony" „when he had made an end of communicating with him." 24: 12-31: 18. The incident of the worship of the Golden calf; the people repent; the covenant is renewed. Ch. 32-34.
5. The construction of the Tabernacle. The glory of God fills the house. The dedication is on the first day of the month of the second year of the Exodus. (40: 17.) Ch. 35-40.

III.

LEVITICUS.

THE LAWS OF THE NATION.

CONNECTION OF LEVITICUS WITH EXODUS.

This book is a continuation of Exodus which closes with the completion of the Tabernacle. Leviticus opens with an account of the laws which governed the offerings and ritual of the Lord's House. Henceforth God is not to dwell apart from, but with His people; not on a lonely mountain top but in the Tent which has been set up for Him. There must be a suitable and proper approach to God. This book contains the laws of approach to the Holy God by a sinful yet chosen people. We have in Leviticus what is known as the Priest's Code.

CONTENTS.

The contents are purely legislative and the laws enacted are Civil, Ceremonial, Moral, Religious and Sanitary: those which receive the most attention are the Religious and Ceremonial. A large part of the book is occupied with instructions for the service of the Sanctuary. The only historical portions are the accounts of the consecration of the priests and the death of Nadab and Abihu (ch. 8-10); also the punishment of the blasphemer. 24: 10-14.

THE PURPOSE.

Everything is calculated to stimulate the spiritual life. "Sanitary and dietary laws are not laid down as such but are made distinctive marks of a consecrated life of a chosen people"; details of ritual are prescribed to express the sense of the holiness of God in whose service they are exercised. The effort of the law was to make Israel a "Holy Nation."

THE LAW OF SACRIFICE.

This law occupies much of the book; its form and significance are of importance.

I. *The Form:*

(a) The animals offered for sacrifice must be clean and perfect.

(b) The vessels used must be pure.

(c) The place of sacrificing must be sanctified.

(d) The priests must be consecrated.

II. *The Significance:* The Israelites were taught:

1. That God is holy and man is sinful.

2. There must be some means of approach to a Holy God by a sinful man. God desires to enter into fellowship with man.

3. The man who breaks the covenant or law is worthy of death. Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin.

4. God approaches man and appoints this way of sacrifice as an atonement for sin and accepts through His mercy the sacrifice of the victim instead of the

death of the sinner (See Leviticus ch. 16.) All this looked forward to Christ the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1: 29.

5. The principal offerings were: (a) The Trespass or Sin-offering, denoting access to God. (b) The Burnt-offering, denoting consecration to God. (c) The Peace-offering, denoting communion with God.

ANALYSIS.

This book has been divided into three sections (Driver); I. Ch. 1-16. Fundamental Laws of Sacrifice, Purification and Atonement. II. Ch. 17-26. The Law of Holiness. III. Ch. 27. The Commutation of Vows and Tithes.

Leviticus may also be divided according to the subjects of the chapters or groups of chapters.

I. LAW OF THE FIVE PRINCIPAL TYPES OF SACRIFICE. Ch. 1-7.

(a) The burnt-offering. Ch. 1.

(b) The meal-offering. Ch. 2.

(c) The peace-offering. Ch. 3.

(d) The sin-offering. Ch. 4.

(e) The guilt-offering. 5: 1-6: 7.

(f) Directions to the priests in regard to the regulations to be observed in offering the different sacrifices. 6: 8-7: 38.

II. LAW OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS. Ch. 8-10.

(a) The Consecration of Aaron and his sons. Ch. 8.

(b) The first offerings of Aaron for himself and the people. Ch. 9.

(c) Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron are punished for offering strange fire before the Lord. 10: 1-7.

(d) The Priests are not to drink wine nor strong drink when they go into the Tabernacle. The Priest's share in the offerings. 10: 8-20.

III. THE LAW OF PURITY. Ch. 11-16.

(a) Pure food, what animals are clean and may be eaten. Ch. 11.

(b) A pure body and a pure house; rules for cleansing. Ch. 12-15.

(c) A pure nation: an offering for the sin of the people on the Day of Atonement. Ch. 16.

(d) Regulations in regard to animals offered in sacrifice; they are to be presented and slain at the central sanctuary. Directions in regard to the blood and flesh of animals. Ch. 17.

IV. THE LAW OF SEPARATION. Ch. 18-20.

Israel is to be a separate and Holy Nation and not to walk after the doings of Egypt and Canaan. 18: 1-5.

(a) To avoid unlawful marriages and lusts and Molech worship. Ch. 18.

(b) A renewal of certain moral and social laws and precepts, all tending to promote an upright and pure life. Ch. 19-20.

V. THE LAW REGULATING THE LIFE OF THE PRIESTS. Ch. 21-22.

Directions are given concerning the holiness, the marriage, bodily perfection and purity of those who minister at God's altar.

VI. THE LAW OF THE FEASTS. Ch. 23-25.

(a) The Sabbath; The Passover; Pentecost; Trumpets; The Day of Atonement; Tabernacles; and how they are to be observed. Ch. 23.

(b) We have in Ch. 24, as an interpolation certain regulations for the lamps of the Tabernacle, the shewbread and the law of the blasphemer.

(c) The law of the Feasts is resumed and directions are given for the observance of the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee. Ch. 25.

VII. THE LAW OF BLESSING AND CURSING. Ch. 26.

Life and death, good and evil are set before the Israelites dependent upon their serving or not serving God.

VIII. THE LAW OF VOWS AND TITHES. Ch. 27.

"No devoted thing may be redeemed; the tithe may not be changed."

IV. NUMBERS.

THE TRAINING OF A NATION.

NAME: This book is called Numbers from the fact that in it is an account of the double numbering of the people, first at Sinai (Ch. 1.) and afterwards at Moab, (Ch. 26.)

CONTENTS.

It is a brief record of what the nation did from the second year after leaving Egypt up to its arrival at the borders of Canaan in the fortieth year of the journeying. In time it embraces about thirty-eight years.

RELATION TO LEVITICUS.

The Covenant had been made; the Law given; the Sanctuary set up; the Priests consecrated and it now remained for the nation to be conformed to the Law and trained for its great work. In Leviticus the lessons are given; in Numbers, we see the nation at school getting the lessons.

OBJECT.

The immediate point towards which the narrative moves is the occupation of the Promised Land;

hence the book opens with a mustering of all the fighting men; the purpose of this census is clearly stated in the expression, "all that were able to go forth to war" which occurs thirteen times in the first chapter. There was to be hard fighting and every male "from twenty years old and upward" able to bear arms was enrolled in the army and trained for a holy war. God was behind Israel, but Israel was charged to neglect no point of discipline and training.

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE OBJECT.

(a) *The Advance of the Army or Nation* to the borders of Canaan took place soon after the first mustering; spies were sent into the Promised Land; they reported a good land but many obstacles in the way.

(b) *The Retreat.* The people became afraid and lost faith in God; here began the wandering which lasted for about thirty-eight years; until all that faithless generation was dead.

(c) *The March to Victory.* When a new generation had grown up which had not known Egypt and which had undergone the discipline of two score years, a second mustering was held and this new generation of warriors marched to victory over the Canaanites.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE DESERT WANDERING.

There are few great or startling events recorded; for the most part the time was spent in a daily round

of duties. We have but a very meagre record of these years. But a new race grew up inured to hardness, trained in God's laws and imbued with courage, self-help, self-reliance; not a race of ex-slaves but an army of daring and disciplined warriors.

MANNER OF DESERT LIFE.

The Desert of Sinai, as is now known, was capable of sustaining a large population at the time of the Exodus.

It is not likely that the whole multitude marched every day; a distinct forward movement was made from time to time. We may picture the scene: The Tabernacle, surrounded and cared for by the Leaders and Levites, formed the rallying point which was moved forward from time to time while the great bulk of the people, like the Arabs of to-day, was scattered abroad seeking pasture for their flocks and herds.

ANALYSIS.

This Book has been divided into three sections:

I. THE PREPARATION. Ch. 1-10: 10.

The place is Sinai. These first ten chapters show the *preparation* made to enter the Promised Land.

- (a) In the mustering of the tribes and the care of the Tabernacle. Ch. 1-4.
- (b) In the enforced purity of the camp. Ch. 5-6.
- (c) In the offerings for proper worship. Ch. 7-8.
- (d) In the observance of the Passover that God might be recognized by all as the Savior and Protector of this people. Ch. 9.
- (e) In the signals for service. Ch. 10: 1-10.

II. THE MARCH. Ch. 10: 11-21:35.

The journey from Sinai to Moab. This is a long period to be covered in so few chapters. There is here the record of all there is known of the thirty-eight years of wandering: at the best it is only the record of a *Series of Episodes*.

(a) The journey to the borders of Canaan with incidents of burning at Taberah, the sending of quails, the sedition of Miriam and Aaron and the expedition of the spies with their report. Ch. 10: 11- Ch. 13.

(b) The curse of wandering pronounced because the nation lost faith in God and refused to enter Canaan; the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; Moses striking the rock; the plague of serpents with various enactments. Ch. 14-20.

(c) The defeat of Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan. Ch. 21.

III. THE VICTORY. 22: 1-36.

The Place is the Plain of Moab.

(a) The Blessing of Balaam who is sent for to curse the Israelites by Balak king of Moab. The Sin of Israel and its consequences. Ch. 22: 1-25.

(b) The second numbering of the people. Ch. 26.

(c) The successor to Moses is Joshua. Offerings and vows to be observed. Ch. 27-30.

(d) Triumph over the Midianites. Two tribes and a half receive their inheritance east of Jordan. List of wilderness stations. Ch. 31-33.

(e) Division of Canaan provided for, with provision for the Levitical cities, cities of Refuge and the Inheritance of daughters. Ch. 34-36.

V

DEUTERONOMY.

REVIEW OF THE LAW.

SITUATION: The tribes are assembled in an orderly camp on the east side of Jordan. The forty years of wandering are at an end. They are in sight of the Promised Land. Moses recognizes the fact that his leadership is about to end but that the covenant is to abide.

NECESSITY FOR THE BOOK.

A crisis had come in the affairs of the nation and a review of Israel's history and a restatement of God's Laws must be made.

1. *A new generation* had grown up which had not heard the original promulgation of the Law at Sinai.

2. *A new country* was before the nation. This country was devoted to an idolatrous worship of the most seductive kind. On every high hill and in every grove this worship was carried on. An unflinching devotion to God was necessary to resist this alluring worship, which was more to be dreaded than any armed resistance.

3. *New duties:* The people had been leading a nomadic life, now they were to be settled in cities.

and villages and to till the land. The observance of some laws had been suffered to lapse. The people must be shown the need of conforming their lives and conduct in these new relations to God's Laws.

CONTENTS.

This Book contains the record of three addresses which Moses delivered to the people on the plains of Moab at the close of the Desert wanderings the appointment of his successor; his Song and Blessing and an account of his death.

PURPOSE.

Moses endeavors to impress his hearers with the advantages of obedience and the disadvantages of disobedience to God's Law. The spirit and aim of all the legislation is set forth; the style is earnest and impressive. The Book is not a full compendium of the Law; important sections are omitted and additions are made suitable to the changed conditions of their more settled life.

ANALYSIS.

This Book consists in the main of three speeches of Moses.

I. REMEMBRANCE OF GOD'S CARE.

THE FIRST ADDRESS. Ch. 1: 6-4: 40.

- (a) Introductory, giving an account of the place where the Israelites were encamped. Ch. 1: 1-5.
- (b) Historical, calling to the mind of the Israelites their history since they left Egypt and God's care for them. Ch. 1: 6-3.
- (c) Exhortation to obedience. Moses is earnest and eloquent in his appeal for a closer walk with God. Ch. 4: 1-40.

(d) In conclusion Moses appoints three cities of refuge on this side of Jordan. Ch. 4: 41-49.

II. EXPOSITION OF THE LAW.

THE SECOND ADDRESS. Ch. 5: 1-26: 19.

(a) Rehearsal of the Ten Commandments. These commandments are shown to be the basis of all the Mosaic legislation. Ch. 5-6.

(b) The application of the principles of the first Table of the Law. The duty of the utter avoidance of idolatry; the need of humbleness before God that they may not fall into the sin of self-righteousness and be destroyed as their fathers were. Ch. 7-11.

(c) Laws in regard to religion. But one Sanctuary. All idolaters to be cut off. Regulations respecting clean and unclean animals. The three feasts: the Passover, Weeks, and Tabernacles. Ch. 12-16: 17.

(d) Laws in regard to political life. The authority of Judges and Priests is set forth. The methods of procedure in Courts of Justice are defined. The law of witnesses, cities of refuge and war are made known. Ch. 16: 18-Ch. 20.

(e) Laws in regard to Social and Domestic relations. Crimes against society. Relation of husband and wife. Humanity towards brethren. Treatment of Servants, Vows, Trespasses, Divorce, Charity, and matters of Individual character. Ch. 21-26.

III. RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT.

THE THIRD ADDRESS. Ch. 27-30.

(a) The Law to be preserved, a perpetual memorial and reminder to be placed upon great stones when the nation has passed over Jordan. Ch. 27.

(b) The Blessings and Cursings. Ch. 28.

(c) Last Exhortations to Obedience. Ch. 29-30.

CONCLUSION. Ch. 31-33.

(a) Call and Installation of Joshua. Ch. 31.

(b) Song and Blessing of Moses; his Death. Ch. 32-33.

VI.

JOSHUA.

THE SETTLEMENT OF A NATION.

INTRODUCTION: *The Twelve Historical Books* in the Old Testament contain the history of Israel from the first occupation of the Promised Land to the return from captivity. These books are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

THE THREE PERIODS ARE.

1. *The Confederation of Independent Tribes.* Books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth.
2. *The Monarchy.* Rise and Fall of the Israelitish Kingdom. Books: I Samuel to II Chronicles.
3. *The Return from Captivity.* Books: Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

This book is named from its principal character, Joshua. He was born a slave in the brickfields of Egypt. He was a trusted and courageous counselor and leader during the wilderness wanderings. Moses just before his death made him, then about eighty years of age, his successor.

This book embraces a period of nearly twenty-five years: from the crossing of the Jordan River to the assignment of the country amongst the tribes, the renewal of the Covenant at Shechem and the death of Joshua. God is shown as the Covenant keeping God.

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOSHUA.

1. Perfect Faith in God.
2. A Masterly Courage.
3. A Great Leader of Men.
4. Lasting Enthusiasm.
5. Unswerving fidelity in the discharge of his duties.

THE WORK TO BE DONE.

Subduing the Canaanites. Although God works with the Israelites and a number of great miracles are wrought; at the same time, they are required to exert all of their power.

Settlement of the Israelites in the The Promised Land.

CHARACTER OF THE CANAANITES.

They were skilled warriors.

They had the arts of civilization as then known.

They inhabited walled towns.

They had prepared themselves for a stout resistance against the Israelites.

Morals: They were utterly corrupt in worship and morals. They had fallen into a hopeless apostacy; were worshippers of the goddess of Lust and practised nameless vices.

Warning: They had been warned by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; they had been called to repentance by the example and teaching of the Patriarchs but took no heed.

DESTRUCTION OF THE CANAANITES.

This is always represented in Scripture as a punishment for their wickedness. Babylon, Nineveh, and Rome all received similar punishments when they became corrupt. The Israelites, God's chosen people were given as spoil to other nations when they became evil. There is no sadder chapter in history than the final destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR.

This war, if not the greatest, is one of the greatest on record.

It was a war for:

The Purification of the Land, the Temple and the Home.

Civil Liberty: This Israelitish nation, under God was to govern itself, God's free nation. This was a new pattern of government.

Religious Liberty, Freedom from Superstition, Idolatry and Vice.

The whole Earth. In Israel all nations were to be blessed. In this land, a Son of this nation, Messiah was to come.

ANALYSIS.

I. CONQUEST OF CANAAN. Ch. 1-12.

(a) The tribes ordered to prepare for crossing over Jordan
Ch. 1-

(b) Spies are sent out who return with a hopeful report. Ch. 2.

(c) The Jordan divided; the tribes make the crossing. Ch. 3-4.

(d) First act in the Promised Land; the religious feast of the Passover. Ch. 5.

(e) Beginning and incidents of the war. Jericho taken. Ch. 6. Israelites repulsed at Ai, Ai taken. Ch. 7-8: 29.

(f) An Altar built to God on Mt. Ebal. Ch. 8: 29-35.

(g) Prosecution and End of the war. The kings of the Canaanites combine against the Israelites and suffer a great defeat at Beth-horan. God fights for His chosen people. In all, thirty-one kings are defeated. Ch. 9-12.

Attention is called to the fact that in this war, extending over a number of years, we have recorded only a few of the most striking events. God's care and help in these events are shown in a remarkable way.

II. ASSIGNMENT OF LANDS. Ch. 13-22.

(a) Indicating the boundaries of the land to be divided. Ch. 13.

(b) How the land was apportioned: Nine and a half tribes have their portions on the west side of Jordan and two and a half on the east. Ch. 14-17.

(c) The Tabernacle is set up at Shiloh. Ch. 18: 1. Continued division of the land. Ch. 18: 2-19.

(d) Six cities of refuge appointed. Forty-eight cities given to the Levites. Ch. 20-21. The two and a half tribes depart for the East. Ch. 22.

III. JOSHUA'S FAREWELL. Ch. 23-24.

(a) Growing old he convenes the Tribes at Shechem. 23-24: 1.

(b) Brief historical survey. Ch. 24: 1-16.

(c) Calls to mind God's goodness and warns the Tribes against idolatry and charges them to be faithful to God. Ch. 24: 17-24.

(d) Renews the Covenant. 24: 24-28.

(e) Death of Joshua. 24: 29-33.

VII.

JUDGES AND RUTH.

THE CONFLICTS OF A NATION.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOKS.

The Book of Judges is a series of striking historical pictures, portrayed with a painstaking fidelity. They reveal the condition of the country, the people and the times. They show the conflicts of the nation with itself and its Canaanitish neighbors, when there was no king in the land. We find here the record of the faithfulness, the righteousness and mercy of God.

The Book of Ruth is properly a continuation of *Judges* and was so classed in the Old Testament until about the middle of the fifth century after Christ. It is very important because it gives the lineage of David through the whole period of the *Judges*. We have here an exquisitely beautiful picture of the best family life of the times.

Both books treat of the life of Israel from the death of Joshua to the rule of Eli.

THE WORK OF THE JUDGES.

The *Judges* not only exercised judicial functions but were leaders of armed hosts to uphold God's cause against hostile forces and to assert the principles

upon which the nation was founded. The office was not hereditary, but the judges were raised up as occasion required.

Fifteen are mentioned by name: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, (and Barak), Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon and Samson. Eli and Samuel, whose names belong with the judges, are treated of in I Samuel. The book of Judges describes the work of only thirteen of these men: the record of the exploits of six judges is given quite at length; the deeds of the other seven very briefly.

REASONS FOR THE RISE OF THE JUDGES.

Since the departure from Egypt the Israelites had been under the leadership of two remarkable men, Moses and Joshua. The tribes had acted as one army. Common dangers and objects had made their interests one. Now the great leaders are dead. The tribes are scattered over the land; their foes, their interests, their cares are different. They have no king, no common master. Hence as occasion requires or danger arises in this or that quarter a judge is raised up to lead the people until the trouble is over.

CONDITION OF THE ISRAELITES.

The condition of this people in these times is summed up in these constantly repeated words:

“The children of Israel again did evil in the eyes of the Lord,” followed by the statements;

(a.) “The Lord sold them into the hand of the oppressor.”

(b.) "The Lord raised up a deliverer."

Then follows the story of the judge who was raised up, and of the deliverance. See the stories of Gideon, Samson and the rest.

PROBLEMS OF THE TIMES.

There were three in number:

1. *Political.* The change in the life of the people from nomadic to agricultural was no easy one. In the desert there was a strong central authority; in the Land of Promise the people were isolated and had a tribal government which was not always strong. The nations about the tribes were ready to take every advantage to harass them. The Israelites had no light task to maintain themselves in this conquered land.

2. *Social.* The Canaanites remaining in the country naturally became teachers in the management of the land and the manner of living. Coming into intimate relations with them the Israelites adopted many of their evil customs. Then came intermarriages. The results were social troubles of the worst kind.

3. *Religious.* This Canaanitish religion was an easy and seductive one: it ministered to the evil propensities in man. The religion of Jehovah required purity in life and character. The religion of Baal was a constant stumbling block.

The solution of these Problems came not through the Israelites, but through God, who wrought deliverance by the judges

CANDOR OF THE NARRATIVE.

There is a plain statement of the sins of this people. There is no attempt to gloss over, excuse or in any way palliate their shortcomings.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE PREFACE. Ch. 1-3: 6.

(a) The connection with the book of Joshua is shown and a short restatement of history up to his death is made. Ch. 1. 1-2: 9.

(b) A statement is made in regard to the history about to be related. Ch. 2: 10-3: 6.

II. DELIVERANCES WROUGHT BY THE JUDGES. Ch. 3: 7-Ch. 16.

(a) Othniel, raised up to deliver the people from Chushanri-shathaim, king of Mesopotamia. Ch. 3: 7-11.

(b) Ehud and Shamgar. Ehud delivers from Eglon, king of Moab. Ch. 3: 12-30. Shamgar slays 600 Philistines. 3: 31.

(c) Deborah and Barak deliver from Jabin and Sisera. Ch. 4-5.

(d) Gideon and his son Abimelech. Gideon delivers from the Midianites. Ch. 6-9. Abimelech overcomes the Shechemites Ch. 10.

(e) Tola and Jair judge and defend Israel 45 years. Ch. 10: 1-5.

(f) Jephthah delivers from the Ammonites. Ch. 10: 6-12: 7.

(g) Ibzon, Elon, Abdon, judge Israel. Ch. 12: 8-15.

(h) Samson. His 12 exploits against the Philistines. Ch. 12: 16-Ch. 16.

III. STORIES OF ISRAELITISH LIFE. Ch. 17-21. Ruth 1-4.

(a) The story of Micah and his Priest. Showing the corruption of the worship of Jehovah and the rough spirit of the times. Ch. 17-18.

(b) The story of the Levite. A horrible story showing the very worst phase of life in the times of the Judges. Ch. 19-21.

(c) The story of Ruth. One of the sweetest stories in the Bible showing that even in the blackest period God has men and

women who love and serve Him. In Boaz we have the model rich man of this age; every act and word shows his deep faith in God. In Ruth we have an example of modesty and patience coupled with a remarkable belief in the true God. In Naomi we have a specimen of a good woman whose religion shows itself in fidelity to all her duties.

VIII.

I and II SAMUEL.

THE BEGINNING OF THE MONARCHY.

INTRODUCTION: In the three double books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles is found the record of the Rise, Glory and Fall of the Israelitish Monarchy.

THE SCOPE:

The great event in the Books of Samuel is the establishment of a Monarchy.

The three leading characters are Samuel, Saul and David.

These books open with the aged Priest Eli as the Priest, Judge and Leader of the people. Samuel is born in answer to prayer; he takes the place of Eli. The people ask for a king; Saul is given; Saul proving unworthy is deposed and David takes his place. The books close with the end of his reign.

THE LAST JUDGE OF ISRAEL.

Samuel has been placed next to Moses in the great work which he did. Moses under God was the founder of the Theocracy. Samuel was the founder of the Monarchy; he is one of the most majestic figures in the Old Testament; his public and private acts are above reproach. When he became judge the tribes

were at war with the surrounding nations and with themselves; the national religion had fallen into decay. When he died the tribes had become a nation respected and feared by their enemies and Jehovah's religion was firmly established.

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY.

Necessity. It is evident that God intended the Israelites to become a great nation living immediately under His government and knit together by faith in Him. But they proved themselves unworthy. They disregarded God's commands; fell into evil ways and were fast losing their national and religious life.

Steps leading to the Kingdom. The experience and condition of the people under the later judges constituted the first step. It was clearly seen that for salvation from their troubles a strong union must be made. Samuel was ordered by God to accede to the people's wishes; reluctant at first, he finally yielded and anointed Saul as king.

THE FIRST KING.

"Saul is one of the most dramatic as well as one of the saddest characters in Old Testament History." As a young man he gave promise of a very bright career. His ability as a leader, a statesman and a warrior was of the first order. He assumed the reins of government with great zeal and soon made his power felt throughout the land. But his fault was in the fact that he tried to reign like the kings round about him and not to regard himself as truly a

subject of God as any one of his people. Feeling his rejection most keenly, the latter end of his life was embittered by fits of deep melancholy.

THE SECOND KING.

David the shepherd lad called to be king in place of Saul proved himself to be an almost ideal king. The key-note of his character is struck in his duel with Goliath. "Then said David, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts." In this supreme trust in God is marked his entire difference from Saul. After the death of the first king, David was invited to the throne of Judah. The Northern Tribes remained faithful to Saul, and Ishbosheth, his son, reigned over them until his assassination when they invited David to be their king; he was then crowned a second time in the city of Hebron.

The home policy of David was centralization of power. Soon after he became king of the whole nation, he besieged Jerusalem (then called Jebus) and taking it made it the political and ecclesiastical capital of his kingdom.

After coming into the Land of Promise the Hebrews had worshipped at many local shrines such as Gilgal, Tabor and Bethel; now all these were broken up and the worship centered at the Temple. The importance of this change cannot be overestimated.

The foreign policy of David was strong and vigorous. He was not content to wait and repulse attacks but carried on a war of conquest. The hered

itary enemies of Israel, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Scythians and the Amalekites were made vassals and the borders of the kingdom extended from the Mediterranean to the River Euphrates.

Summary of David's work.

We are indebted to the narrative for the whole picture of David's life. No attempt is made to conceal his faults. The consequences of his great sin with Bathsheba in the murder of Uriah, and the rebellion of Absalom are plainly shown. David's repentance is also set forth. In all respects David is the strongest king that Israel had. He had fine executive ability, was a skillful soldier and possessed of a deep religious nature. From the nucleus of a weak tribal life he built up a great empire and founded a royal line which was to end in Christ who is King over all.

RISE OF THE PROPHETIC ORDER.

One of the most striking features of these books is the order of the Prophets which suddenly presents itself. No explanation is given for its origin. Up to this time the priest has been the chosen medium through which God communicated His will to His people. Now the prophet to a great extent takes his place. This order represented the independence of the moral portion of the nation and the Divine will as distinct from government or priestly enactment.

Schools were established in which the prophets were trained for their work much like our Theolog-

ical Seminaries to-day. Such a school was situated at Ramah.

Instruction was given in the Sacred Books and in poetry. The pupils were also taught to play upon musical instruments.

Results. They were far reaching. The graduates of these schools became teachers of religion and patriotism. They made copies of the sacred Law and kept the text free from error. They became the preachers to the people; denouncing national, family and individual sins. They encouraged the people in times of trial or disaster. All the Prophets did not possess the Prophetic Gift. In a number of cases the inspired prophet came from the Prophetic School but the prophetic gift was from God. The inspired prophets predicted the captivity, the return and the coming glory of Messiah's reign.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE ADMINISTRATION OF SAMUEL. I Samuel 1-12.

(a) The birth of Samuel. Samuel born in answer to prayer is dedicated to the Temple service. Pronounces the doom on Eli's house. Ch. 1-3: 18.

(b) Samuel made a Prophet before the Lord. Ch. 3: 19-21.

(c) Samuel's great victory through God's help at Ebenezer. Ch. 7: 5-17. The events which preceded this victory; The Israelites overcome by the Philistines. Ch. 4, The Ark taken and returned. Ch. 5-6. The Philistines vanquished. Ch. 7.

(d) Samuel anoints Saul king by command of God. Ch. 8-11.

(e) Samuel asserts his integrity. Ch. 12. He lays down his office as Judge.

II. THE ADMINISTRATION OF SAUL. I Samuel 13-31.

(a) The turning point in Israelitish history. Saul established

as King. Ch. 13. Saul's son Jonathan and his notable victory over the Philistines. Saul's wife and family. Ch. 14.

(b) Saul's disobedience in the matter of the Amalekites. Ch. 15.

(c) Saul rejected and David anointed as King. Ch. 16: 1-15. Saul, before he was rejected, was twice reminded by Samuel that he reigned under God.

(d) Gradual fall of Saul and rise of David. From Ch. 17 to close of 1st Samuel. David comes to the court of Saul. Ch. 16: 16-23. Saul's armies are before the Philistines; David slays their champion, Goliath. Ch. 17.

The friendship of David and Jonathan. Ch. 18-20.

Saul seeks the life of David and David flees before him to the wilderness. Ch. 21-27.

Various adventures of David. Ch. 28-30.

(e) Suicide of Saul in Mt. Gilboa. Ch. 31.

III. THE ADMINISTRATION OF DAVID. II Samuel. Ch. 1-24.

(a) David is made king at Hebron over Judah where he reigns seven and a half years. In the first four chapters we have the elegy on the death of Saul and Jonathan. David is made king at Hebron. Ishbosheth is made king over the northern tribes and then slain. Ch. 1-4.

(b) David made king over all Israel at Hebron. Ch. 5: 1-3.

(c) David besieges Jerusalem and constitutes it the Political Capital for the nation. Ch. 5.

(d) David brings the Ark to Zion and so Jerusalem becomes the Religious Capital for the nation. But David is not allowed to build a Temple. Ch. 6-7.

(e) David extends the boundaries of the kingdom from the Mediterranean to the river Euphrates. Ch. 8-10.

(f) David's Sin. His sin in the matter of Bathsheba, resulted in the murder of Uriah; humiliation in his own family; the rebellion of Absalom; the flight of David and the civil war. Ch. 11-18.

(g) Repentance and return of David to Jerusalem. Ch. 19

1. The revolt of Sheba is put down. Ch. 20.

2. The matter of the Gibeonites is settled. Ch. 21.
3. David's song of Thanksgiving and expression of Faith in God. Ch. 22-23.
4. David numbers the people; the consequence is a plague which is stayed by proper repentance and sacrifices. Ch. 24.

I and II KINGS.

THE GLORY AND FALL OF THE KINGDOM.

SCOPE: The Books of Kings form but one book in the ancient Hebrew manuscripts. They give us the history of the death of David, the reign of Solomon, the divided kingdom and the captivity.

CREDIBILITY: The truth of this history stands to-day beyond question. The contact with Assyria, Egypt and Babylon is confirmed, supplemented and strikingly illustrated by the cuneiform and other inscriptions. "Berosus, Manetho, Menander and Dios, the heathen historians of these countries, join with the monuments in the support which they furnish to our author's truthfulness and accuracy."

POINT OF VIEW: This narrative, while dwelling upon the political conditions and changes of the Israelitish people, is written from a religious standpoint. "The whole is a conflict between faith and infidelity," between the kings who did evil in the sight of God and the kings who put away the false gods, between the pure worship of Jehovah and the false worship of Baal (synonymous with self-indulgence and immorality). Israel finally yields to evil influences and her record is dropped while

Judah, repenting of her unfaithfulness, is restored and made the medium for the fulfillment of the promises.

THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM.

David, shortly before his death, made a declaration in favor of his son Solomon, who was placed upon the throne. Then began that brilliant reign for which David had made preparation by his wise policy at home, his conquests abroad and the great store of material and treasure which he had accumulated. Solomon's rule began and continued for a while in a blaze of glory but the end was shrouded in clouds and darkness.

The Home Policy of Solomon. This is summed up in one word "*Absolutism.*" At first sincerely desiring to do God's will he asked for and received the gift of "wisdom," but as luxury increased he became more and more like an oriental despot. He placed heavy burdens of taxes upon the people; he built fortresses at Hazor in the north, Megiddo in the centre, and Gezer and Beth-horan in the west. Jerusalem was fortified and a great palace built for the king's use. The old civil liberty was a thing of the past.

The Foreign Policy of Solomon. Again we have one word to characterize this policy: "*Diplomacy.*" Solomon formed alliances with the nations round about; the one with Hiram, king of Tyre, is noticeable. He married the daughter of the Pharaoh of the reigning house of Egypt. He built ships upon

the Red Sea which sailed to India and brought back the strange things produced in that far off land.

With the luxuries of other countries were brought in the vices and the old simplicity of living departed.

The Church Policy of Solomon. The building of the Great Temple on Mt. Moriah will always constitute the chief glory of this reign. The splendor of this house of God and its services has never been surpassed. The purpose of Solomon was to concentrate the worship for Israel upon Mt. Moriah.

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

This is a sad story of disruption; civil war; internal quarrels; bloodshed; the sudden call to arms against powerful invaders; the sack of cities and the final carrying away into captivity of Israel and Judah.

The causes are not difficult to find. The court of an oriental monarch always breeds them and Solomon's was no exception; the country groaned under an intolerable burden of taxes; luxury and vice sapped the moral foundations and with the introduction of foreign forms of belief the religious bond was broken.

The northern kingdom had long been jealous of the rule of Judah; therefore when Solomon's son, Rehoboam, at Shechem, declared that the burden of his rule would be heavier than that of his father there was instant revolt and Jeroboam was called to be king of the northern kingdom. Rehoboam might still have subdued Israel by force of arms, as the mil-

itary equipment and treasury of the former united kingdom remained in his hands, had he not been forbidden by the word of God at the mouth of She-maiah, the prophet. In the fifth year of Rehoboam, Shishak, king of Egypt, besieged and pillaged Jerusalem.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM.

This kingdom was much larger and the land more fertile than the southern. Upon Jeroboam's accession to the throne he made his capital at Shechem; he was not the founder of a dynasty; he aimed simply to make himself secure. He caused Israel to sin, establishing sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel where he set up calf worship. The Priests and Levites of Jehovah departed to Jerusalem; the priests of the new worship were entirely dependent upon Jeroboam.

Northern Israel had nineteen kings and nine dynasties. The names of the kings are: Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah and Hoshea. A number of these kings were usurpers, raised to the throne by military violence. Samaria, afterwards made the capital, was taken by Shalman-ezer, king of Assyria, in 721 B. C. and the people carried into captivity never to return.

Warnings: Prior to this the kingdom was not allowed to go on in sinning without many warnings from God's prophets. Elijah, on Mt. Carmel, by a dramatic display of Jehovah's power, proved His

superiority to Baal but the people would take no heed; Elijah continued his work of warning and expostulation in vain. We have the written records of four prophets who tried to save Israel from Assyria and failed. Their names are: Jonah, Amos, Hosea and Micah.

THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM.

The first three kings, Rehoboam, Abijah and Asa bent all their efforts to reconquer the northern kingdom and failed; the succeeding kings were sometimes in accord with this policy and sometimes in alliance with Israel against common foes. The disunion had caused the vassal nations to revolt and both Israel and Judah were constantly at war to preserve their national life. Internal dissensions and evils were gradually doing their work. There was always with Judah a little of the old religious life, no matter how wicked or idolatrous the reigning king.

There were twenty kings and but one dynasty. The names of the kings are: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Queen Athaliah, Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah (or Azariah), Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin (or Coniah) and Zedekiah.

The religious life was fostered by the prophets. The prophets of Judah were: Joel, Isaiah and Nahum; these succeeded in rescuing Judah from the power of Assyria. Zephaniah, Habbakuk and Jeremiah endeavored by their warnings to save Judah from captivity by Babylon but failed. Nebuchad-

nezzar, in 586 B. C., took Jerusalem. Judah fell about a century and a half after the northern kingdom.

THE CAPTIVITY.

The 1st Book of Kings opens with the Israelitish nation at the height of its power; the 2nd Book closes with Israel and Judah in captivity. The cause is plainly stated in the fact that they would not obey God. It was only by divine mercy that the kingdoms lasted so long. It was not the nations who took them into captivity, but God that they might learn lessons that they would not learn as a free people.

The Great Assyrian Empire which took Israel captive had its capital at Nineveh and lasted from 1270 to 625 B. C.

The Babylonian Empire, which took Judah captive had its capital at Babylon and lasted from 625 to 539 B. C.

THE PROPHETIC ACTIVITY.

The prophets play a very important part in the history of these times. For the most part they were against the government since many of the kings did not desire to adopt the lofty ideals of Jehovah. Ahab calls Elijah his enemy. They were the conscience of the nation. They represented Jehovah and did much to recall the nation to the practice of a pure religion. They fostered a spirit of expectation and encouraged a long look forward to the great glory of Israel in a coming Messiah.

ANALYSIS. I AND II KINGS.

I. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON. I Kings Ch. 1-11.

(a) Solomon's accession to the throne. Upon the failure of the plot of Adonijah, Solomon is raised to the throne and David gives him a solemn charge to walk in God's ways. Ch. 1-2.

(b) The internal relations of the monarchy. Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter; his prayer for wisdom. The equipment of the court and the empire. The building and dedication of the Temple. The erection of the king's palace. Ch. 5-9: 9.

(c) The foreign relations of the monarchy. Treaty with Hiram, king of Tyre. The visit of the Queen of Sheba. Commerce with Ophir. Ch. 9: 10-10: 13.

(d) The condition of the monarchy. The description of the wealth and luxury of the court is followed by the account of the many wives of Solomon who turned his heart to strange deities. The king's unfaithfulness is shown and a prediction of the dis-
tinction of the empire is made. Ch. 10: 14-11.

II. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM. 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17.

THERE ARE THREE WELL MARKED PERIODS.

1st PERIOD. Ch. 12-16: 28.

There is sharp contention between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. I K. 12-16: 28.

(a) The Southern Kingdom ruled over in succession by Rehoboam, Abijah and Asa, is in constant conflict with Northern Israel. Shishak, king of Egypt, greatly weakens Judah by sacking Jerusalem, but Asa hires the Syrians and is successful in his contest with Israel.

(b) In Northern Israel Jeroboam sets up sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel and appoints priests, not of the Levitical line. Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, succeeds him. Baasha usurps the throne and is followed by his son Elah who is murdered by his servant Zimri. Omri overthrows Zimri and founds a new dynasty.

2nd PERIOD. 1 Kings 16: 29-2 K. 11: 20.

The two kingdoms owing to a marriage alliance of the reigning families stand in quite friendly relations.

The son of Omri, Ahab, succeeds him in the throne of the Northern Kingdom; he marries Jezebel daughter of the king of Phœnicia, who leads him to introduce the worship of Baal and Astarte. It is against this worship that Elijah makes his fiery protest. Ahab makes successful war against Syria but is finally slain at Ramoth Gilead. The daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, Athaliah, marries Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. Ahaziah, the son of this union and king of Judah, is put to death by a revolution led by Jehu of the northern kingdom, when on a visit to his kinsman. Athaliah, hearing of the death of her son, seizes the throne of Judah and puts to death all the royal seed, Joash an infant alone escaping. At length, after six years, Jehoiada, the High Priest, shows Joash to the people. Athaliah is slain and he is proclaimed king. Elijah and Elisha in the northern kingdom make strong efforts to stay the evils which are destroying the nation.

3d PERIOD. II Kings Ch. 12-18.

The two kingdoms again assume attitudes of hostility.

(a) In the southern kingdom Joash under the guidance of Jehoiada, the High Priest, brings about a religious reformation and puts away the idolatry introduced by Athaliah.

Under Azariah, or Uzziah, Judah enjoys great prosperity for fifty-two years.

During this period there are sharp conflicts with the northern kingdom, and Judah is threatened with invasion from the kings of Syria and Assyria.

(b) In the northern kingdom Jeroboam II. wins back for Israel nearly the former dominion; he reigns for 42 years with great energy; with the death of his son and heir, Zechariah, the throne is occupied by a succession of usurpers and the story of the kingdom hastens to its close. Shalmanezar, king of Assyria, puts an end to the kingdom and carries the people into captivity.

III. THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH. 2 Kings 19-25.

The historian now follows the fortunes of Judah, since the Northern Kingdom has been destroyed.

(a) A revival of religion under Hezekiah is noted; in this movement Isaiah is very conspicuous. This is followed by a backward movement under kings Manasseh and Amon. 19-21.

(b) With the book of the law found in the Temple, Josiah begins a vigorous campaign against the evils of his time; his reformation is cut short by his early death. Ch. 22:1-23:29.

(c) But the end is near, nothing now can save Judah. The captivity is necessary to preserve a remnant of the people that the promises may be fulfilled. Jehoiachin, succeeds Jehoiakim, son of Josiah. He is taken to Babylon with thousands of his people, by Nebuchadnezzar the king. Zedekiah is placed on the throne but the king of Babylon believing him to be unfaithful returns and after a siege of three years takes and destroys Jerusalem. Ch. 23:30 to end.

X.

I AND II CHRONICLES.

A REVIEW OF SACRED HISTORY.

CONTENTS: The books of Chronicles were originally one. The narrative begins with Adam and is brought down to the time of the restoration of Judah from the captivity. It is the history of all that has gone before briefly rewritten.

PLAN AND FORM.

Up to this time the books have fitted one into the other, and beginning with Genesis, the other books have recorded a continuous history. Now the connection is broken and the author goes back to Adam for his starting point.

SPECIAL FEATURES.

There are a number of marked contrasts between these and the preceding books that call for notice.

The Genealogical Tables. We here find the ancestry of tribes and families traced back to the earliest times; this does not arise from a mere fancy of the writer but from a real necessity. The tribes or a remnant of them had returned from captivity, and in order that the land might be properly allotted, the

Temple services maintained, the officials have their proper places, the tithes rightly paid, "there must be strict legal proof of hereditary descent." This proof these tables furnished.

The narrative follows the line of Judah. The writer does not mention Israel, except where he is obliged to do so. The kingdom of Israel or the portion that had been taken away into captivity disappeared and the people who had taken the place of the Israelites were hostile to Judah upon the return from captivity. The line of the Messiah is through David.

The narrative is written with a religious purpose, probably by the priests. God's care for His people and His purpose to save them is the theme from beginning to end. "Divine favor is represented as dependent on the faithfulness of rulers and people to the original covenant and divine punishment as the natural result of unfaithfulness." The religious purpose of the writer is seen very clearly in the first nine chapters of II Chronicles where, in describing the glorious rule of Solomon, six chapters are given to the story of the building of the Temple and its services, and only three to recounting other matters pertaining to this reign. The names of the kings who served God and put away idolatry are made very prominent. Thus these books are made the beginning of an ecclesiastical history which extends through the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The Attitude of Faith and Hope. Hardships, wars, pestilences and captivities had done what could

be done to destroy the divine seed and here at the very last it was showing signs of a new and vigorous life in the land of promise. No wonder the returning captives, heirs of such a history and promises, were enthusiastic in their devotion to the law.

These books reveal in a very plain way that God had for this people a particular purpose and mission which must be accomplished.

ANALYSIS. I AND II CHRONICLES.

I CHRONICLES. This book is divided into two parts. The first ten chapters are introductory, the remaining nineteen relate to the history of David.

I. THE FIRST TEN CHAPTERS:

The genealogies of Adam, Japheth, Shem, Ham, Abraham are given, ending with the families of Judah. Ch. 1 and 2. These chapters are followed by the royal line of David (Ch. 3.) and the tables of the twelve tribes with special fullness of detail in regard to Levi and Benjamin. Ch. 4-9. In chapters 8 and 9 the author turns his attention to the kingdom of the South and its genealogies. As the best element in the nation was strict in observance of the law, these tables were very necessary in the allotment of land and the appointments for the temple services. Death of Saul. Ch. 10.

II. THE LAST NINETEEN CHAPTERS.

These relate to the reign of king David.

(a) The election and anointing of David at Hebron. The taking of Jerusalem. The list of David's mighty men before he became king. Ch. 11-12.

(b) The removal of the Ark of God from Kirjath-Jearim to the house of Obed-Edom and from there to Jerusalem. Ch. 13-17.

(c) The wars of David; he overcomes the Philistines, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Ammorites and the Syrians. Ch. 18-20.

(d) David's sin in numbering the people and its expiation. David prepares material for building the Temple. 21-22.

(e) The end of David's reign. The lists of Levites and Priests, divisions of the army, chiefs of Tribes and royal functionaries are given. Arrangements are made for the succession of Solomon and the building of the Temple. David dies. Ch. 23-29.

II CHRONICLES. Nine chapters are given to the history of Solomon and the remainder, twenty-seven, to the rest of the kings; the line of the kings of Judah is followed.

I. THE FIRST NINE CHAPTERS.

(a) Three chapters are devoted to the accession, the glory, wealth and wisdom of Solomon. 1, 8 and 9.

(b) Six chapters are given to detailed accounts of the building of the temple. Provision for its services and its magnificence. God's glory fills His house. Ch. 2-7.

II. THE LAST TWENTY-SEVEN CHAPTERS.

The writer confines himself to the kingdom of Judah, bestowing most attention upon the kings who upheld the service of God.

(a) Reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah and Asa. Ch. 10-16. The kingdom is divided under Rehoboam and the two divisions are at constant war during the reigns of the three kings. Large numbers of Priests and Levites are driven out of Israel by Jeroboam; by their coming to Judah they strengthen the religious life. Abijah overcomes Jeroboam. Asa destroys idolatry in Judah.

(b) Reign of Jehoshaphat. Ch. 17-20. He takes away the high places of idolatry, and institutes a great religious reform. Ch. 17. The people are taught the law of God, and provision is made for the administration of justice. Ch. 19. Jehoshaphat in answer to prayer is delivered from his enemies, but is rebuked for his alliance with Ahaziah, king of Israel. Ch. 20.

(c) *The Reigns of Jehoram (Ch. 21), Ahaziah (Ch. 22), Queen Athaliah (Ch. 22), Joash (Ch. 24), Amaziah (Ch. 25), Uzziah (Ch. 26), Jotham (Ch. 27), Ahaz (Ch. 28).* The records of seven kings and one queen are passed over in rapid succession by the author.

The story is a plain one: Jehoram succeeds Jehoshaphat, his father; having married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, he departs from God and in the end is smitten with an incurable disease. Ahaziah, his son, is killed by the northern reformer Jehu. Athaliah the queen mother usurps the throne, slays all the seed royal except Joash (who is hidden by the high-priest); after six years Joash is made king and Athaliah is slain. This king institutes great religious reforms and restores the temple service. Amaziah succeeding to the throne leaves the way of God and is delivered into the hands of his enemies. Uzziah the next king invades the priest's office and is smitten with leprosy. Jotham trusting in God subdues the Ammonites. Ahaz, an idolater, is greatly afflicted by the Syrians.

(d) Reign of Hezekiah. 29-32. Four chapters are devoted to the good works and splendid record of this king. He cleansed the temple, restored the services, observed the Passover and put away the strange deities. God gave him wonderful prosperity and a great deliverance from the hand of Sennacherib, king of Assyria.

(e) Reigns of Manasseh and Amon. Ch. 33. Manasseh at first serves strange gods but being carried away captive to Babylon, repents and is restored to his kingdom. Amon doing evil and only evil is slain by his servants.

(f) Reigns of Josiah. Ch. 34-35. Jehoahaz, Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. 36: 1-21.

Josiah served the Lord with his whole heart and prospered; his reign is specially noted for the finding of the book of the Law in the temple. Jehoahaz is deposed by the king of Egypt. Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah do evil in the sight of God. Judah is taken captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar the king.

(g) The restoration of Judah in the time of Cyrus, king of Persia. 36: 22-23.

XI.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

THE CAPTIVITY.

The people of the Northern Kingdom were taken into captivity in 721 B. C. and never returned. The people of the Southern Kingdom were taken into captivity in 586 B. C. and returned under the leadership of their own prince Zerubbabel in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, 536 B. C.

The book of Daniel takes up the narrative of the captivity where Chronicles leaves it; Jeremiah, Habakkuk and Ezekiel prophesied during this time and their writings give us faithful pictures of the social, religious and political condition of the Jews.

In raising up these prophets to light the way in these dark times God showed His wonderful goodness to the house of Judah and that He was a covenant keeping God.

THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY.

In the history given in Ezra and Nehemiah we have "a graphic account of the state of Jerusalem and the returned captives; the condition of the Persian government and its remote provinces."

Jerusalem is in ruins and it is the intention of

Sanballat of Samaria, that it shall remain so. The Jews have been received as colonists by their captors and a number have risen to high places in the empire. To go to Jerusalem means to encounter bitter enmity and to begin life's battle over again, but when Cyrus the king gives the word by command of God, thousands of Jews gladly undertake the journey back to the Promised Land.

THE THREE PERIODS OF THE RESTORATION.

In the two books which were formerly counted as one there are three very distinct divisions. 1. Ezra 1-6, a period of 23 years marks the return under Zerubbabel. 2. Ezra 7-10. Between this and the first period there is an interval of 57 years. 'The former period ended with the sixth year of Darius or 515 B. C. and this begins with the seventh year of Artaxerxes. This space represents the remaining 30 years of Darius' reign, the 20 years of Xerxes' and the opening seven years of Artaxerxes' rule. In the seventh year of the last king, Ezra returned with the second colony. 3. Thirteen years after Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, Nehemiah came. (See book of Nehemiah.)

THE WORK OF ZERUBBABEL.

Zerubbabel was the head of the house of Judah. He did not initiate the movement to return for that was begun by God who "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia" to let His people go. Cyrus gave into the hands of Zerubbabel the 5400 vessels of gold and

silver which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple when he captured the city; besides this the people who composed the expedition took with them a great store of goods and gold and silver. The genealogies had been carefully kept in the land of captivity and the people went forth, not a rabble but in orderly bands numbering by families 42,360. The journey was long and tedious, occupying four or five months. Zerubbabel's great work in Jerusalem was the restoration of the daily sacrifice and the rebuilding of the temple; this was not done at once; two years and two months passed before the foundation was laid and an interval of fifteen years elapsed before its completion. This delay was occasioned by the bitter opposition of the people near Jerusalem. The Prophets Haggai and Zechariah by their words incited the Jews to complete the temple in spite of all opposition.

THE WORK OF EZRA.

This famous scribe and priest was a descendant from Hilkiah, the high priest in Josiah's time. He was the head of one of the twenty-two courses of priests under Zerubbabel. He did not return with Zerubbabel, but in about fifty years led a second colony to Jerusalem. Through influence with the king he obtained leave to lead a colony to the holy city. There is a list of 1,754 persons given in Ezra 8, as a part of the company which went with him. He carried much treasure with him and had authority to draw upon the king's treasurer for a further supply; he had also power

to appoint magistrates and governors. The journey occupied a little over four months. When Ezra arrived in the city he found gross abuses, and his great work was in the reformation of these evils and the bringing back of the people to the true worship of God. Later on the work he did in restoring the Scriptures to their proper place in the estimation of the people was a very great one. (See Nehemiah 8.) It is likely that Ezra made a second journey to Jerusalem in Nehemiah's time to accomplish the latter task.

THE WORK OF NEHEMIAH.

Nehemiah was the son of Hachaliah. He is one of the purest and noblest characters portrayed in the Scriptures. He held the high post of cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes. After Ezra's return from Jerusalem matters in that city, which was without walls, seem to have grown bad. The heart of Nehemiah was touched by the woes of his brethren and he asked and obtained permission of the king to repair to Jerusalem. He was made governor of Judea. Arriving in Jerusalem he secretly viewed the ruins and gathering all his forces rebuilt the walls in the short space of fifty-two days, in the face of the most bitter opposition and threats on the part of the enemies of Judah. Nehemiah made provision for the priests and the temple worship; he reformed the abuses, he repressed the exactions of the nobles; he restored the sanctity of the Sabbath and all this he did receiving no salary as governor of this province.

The record shows that he made a second visit to

Jerusalem and when he left to return to the Persian court, there remained as a result of his labors under God a prosperous city with walls and a people enthusiastic for the service of God.

THE GENEALOGIES.

The records or lists of families, priests, Levites, etc., are very important; they show the care which the Jews took to preserve their nationality and the belief they had that they were a people chosen of God for a great part in the world's history. The fact that the first return was led by the Prince of the House of Judah and that the record shows the list of families in their order who went with him is not without deep significance.

ANALYSIS.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

1. THE BOOK OF EZRA IS DIVIDED INTO TWO DISTINCT PARTS:

I. THE FIRST SIX CHAPTERS. We have an account of the times when Zerubbabel was governor, Jeshua high priest and Haggai and Zechariah prophets. Time: 23 years to 516 B. C.

(a) The proclamation of Cyrus allowing the return from captivity and the rebuilding of the Temple. Ch. 1.

(b) The number and names of those who returned. Ch. 2.

(c) The altar set up. The foundations of the temple laid. Ch. 3.

(d) Adversaries stop the building of the Temple. Ch. 4.

(e) The Prophets Haggai and Zechariah urge the renewal of building operations on the Temple. The Temple is finished and dedicated. Ch. 5-6.

II. THE LAST FOUR CHAPTERS.

The narrative relates the journey of Ezra to Jerusalem from

the Persian court and his work in that city. Time: about one year.

(a) Artaxerxes the king, by the request of Ezra, grants him leave to go to Jerusalem. He gives him a friendly letter and a commission; a goodly company go with Ezra. Ch. 7-8:31.

(b) Ezra arrives safely in the city and offers sacrifices. Ch. 8: 32-36.

(c) Ezra seeing the lapse of the people into sin begins his reform. He prays to God, makes confession and the people repenting put away the evil. Ch. 9-10.

2. THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR PARTS:

I. THE FIRST SEVEN CHAPTERS relate the story of Nehemiah, how he came to Jerusalem and what he did in rebuilding the walls. Time: less than a year.

(a) The miserable condition of the people in Jerusalem appeals to Nehemiah and he asks permission of Artaxerxes to go to that city. Ch. 1.

(b) Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem; he secretly views the broken walls; he incites the Jews to build notwithstanding the great opposition on the part of their enemies. Ch. 2-4.

(c) Nehemiah rebukes the usurers who are making unlawful gain out of their brethren. Ch. 5.

(d) A last attempt is made to stop the building of the walls but it is foiled by the energetic action of Nehemiah. The walls are rebuilt and the charge of affairs is placed in the hands of Hanani and Hananiah. Ch. 6-7.

II. THIS SECTION OF THREE CHAPTERS gives to Ezra the most prominent part; Nehemiah being comparatively in the background. Ch. 8-10.

There is here shown:

(a) The wonderful revival of interest in the Scriptures. The people listen to the reading from them for hours at a time.

The Feast of the Tabernacles is kept; a fast is proclaimed and a prayer of confession is offered. A solemn covenant with God is made by the people.

III. THE THIRD PART OF THIS BOOK. Ch. 11-12: 26, consists of very important lists.

(a) The dwellers in Jerusalem with their officers in time of Nehemiah. Ch. 11: 1-24.

(b) The country towns which were inhabited by the returned Jews. Ch. 11: 25-36.

(c) The Priestly and Levitical families who returned in the time of Zerubbabel. Ch. 12: 1-9.

(d) The High Priests from Jeshua to Jada. Ch. 12: 10-11.

(e) The Priestly families under Joiakim, the high priest. Ch. 12: 12-21.

(f) The families of Levites and Porters. Ch. 12: 22-26.

IV. THE LAST SECTION. Ch. 12: 27-13: 31, contains an account of the dedication of the wall some twelve years after its completion. The second return of Nehemiah from the Persian Court and the reforms which he instituted.

XII.

ESTHER.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CAPTIVITY.

The first band of Jews returning from the land of captivity was led by Zerubbabel in 536 B. C., at the beginning of the reign of Cyrus. Ezra led the second colony to Jerusalem eighty years later, or in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. This event narrated in the book of Esther is believed to have taken place in the third year of Xerxes the Great. Now Cyrus reigned seventeen years, Darius, thirty-six, Xerxes, twenty and Ezra returned in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. If these figures are correct this episode probably occurred fifty-six years after the first return and twenty-four years before the second.

THE NAME.

The book takes its name from the Jewish maiden who became the Queen of a Persian king; it was written to explain the origin of the Feast of Purim.

THE STORY AND ANALYSIS.

The story is one of great dramatic power, beauty and intense interest.

King Ahasuerus invites his princes and nobles

from all the provinces to a great banquet; on the seventh day when much wine has been drunk, the king commands the attendance of Vashti, the queen; she refuses to obey the foolish order and is deposed. Ch. 1. Esther, the Jewess, who has been brought up by Mordecai, her uncle, best pleasing the king of all the maidens offered for the vacant place of the queen, is chosen. Ch. 2. Haman, advanced to high favor, is angry with Mordecai because he will not reverence him. In revenge Haman seeks the destruction of all the Jews in the empire; he obtains a decree from the king to this effect. Ch. 3. Mordecai puts on sackcloth and ashes and mourns as do all his countrymen. Esther seeking the cause of mourning is told and entreated to petition the king to avert the threatened destruction. A solemn fast of three days is appointed. Ch. 4. Esther venturing before the king is received with favor and invites the king and Haman to a banquet. Esther defers her request and asks the king and Haman to another banquet. Ch. 5. That night, the king unable to sleep has the chronicles brought in and there reads of a great service which had been done by Mordecai and left unrewarded. Haman is called in and asked, what shall be done to a man whom the king delights to honor; thinking of himself, he proposes a showy honor, which is carried out for Mordecai. Ch. 6. At the second banquet Esther makes suit for her life and her people's which is granted. Haman is hanged. Ch. 7. The Jews are allowed to defend themselves on the day appointed for their destruction. Mordecai

is advanced to a place next to the king. Ch. 8-10

CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE.

The whole story turns on the point of Mordecai's refusal to bow down before Haman (it may have been to concede to him divine honor); the reason given is not that he hates Haman but because he is a Jew and cannot do what Haman requires. Mordecai was of the tribe of Benjamin. He stood for a principle at the risk of his life. He well knew the consequences if he failed to do as Haman desired.

THE KING AND QUEENS.

If this king be Xerxes, as it is believed, everything in the story is in accord with what we know of his character; the feast which he made in the third year of his reign would be a part of the great preparation to invade Greece. Queen Vashti showed noble traits of character in refusing to lend her presence to drunken bout.

Queen Esther was placed in an exceedingly difficult position, but in daring all, even her life, she secured the continued existence of her people.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOOK.

1. The book gives a very graphic picture of Persian life and customs.
2. The Jewish people are recognized as one, a distinct nation, they have not been absorbed in the Gentile body politic.
3. While the name of God is nowhere mentioned

(probably on account of its being held secret and sacred at this time) there is everywhere a recognition of His power and care.

4. There is no connection with the other Bible books; this incident stands alone; without it we would lose much of our knowledge of affairs during the time when the Jews were returning to Jerusalem.

5. The Jews have always taken great pride in this book as it records a great triumph. They have been criticised for slaying their enemies, but the king's decree having gone forth for their destruction and not being able to annul it according to the law of the Medes and Persians, the only thing that could be done was to allow the Jews the right to kill their enemies or defend themselves.

6. The revenge which Haman planned is savage, far-reaching and unique; scorning so small an object of revenge as Mordecai he determined upon the destruction of the whole race to which he belonged, but Haman left out of his calculations the God of this people; in this respect he resembles Julian and Diocletian, the Roman emperors who sought to destroy Christianity and miserably failed.

XIII.

JOB.

THE BOOK stands by itself and makes no allusion to the Mosaic Law and Israelitish history. It is one of the so-called Wisdom Books of the Bible; the other two are Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In Job "it is shown that no affliction from without can destroy the excellence of the character that obeys the law of God."

THE PROBLEMS.

The great questions discussed have engaged the attention of the wisest of all ages.

1. The reconciliation of unmerited suffering with the love and justice of God.
2. The existence of goodness irrespective of reward.
3. The providential government of the world.
4. The delay of divine justice in punishing the wicked.

THE SITUATION.

The story opens with a picture of Job, a very good man, and rich in cattle, herds of sheep, camels and asses "so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east."

The next scene is represented as taking place in heaven where the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord. Satan comes also.

The Lord asks him if he has considered his servant, Job, and remarked his goodness. Satan replies in substance that Job serves God for what he gets, that his goodness is a refined sort of selfishness. This reply leads to the whole action of the book. Job is given into the hand of Satan to afflict as he will. Not understanding the sudden change in affairs Job is greatly perplexed. Three friends come to condole with him; they try to make him believe that he has committed some sin which is the cause of his calamities. Out of the integrity of his heart he refutes their arguments. The discussion turns on the question: "Why a righteous God inflicts suffering on a good man."

THE AUTHENTICITY, TIME AND PLACE.

It is generally conceded that though the book is "a dramatic poem set in a frame of epic narrative" it is founded upon historical fact. Various times have been assigned for the composition of this work. Some critics think the narrative should be placed back in the patriarchal age; other authorities give a later date. The place: the land of Uz.

CHARACTER OF JOB.

Job is shown as a man keenly alive to his position as a sufferer. He is no stoic. He feels deeply the loss of wealth and position; the insinuations of his

friends hurt him; yet he stands fast in his integrity and belief in a just God.

ANALYSIS.

THE BOOK FALLS NATURALLY INTO FIVE PARTS.

I. THE PROLOGUE. 1-3.

(a) Scene on earth. Job prosperous and happy.

(b) Scene in Heaven. Satan before the Lord's throne accuses Job of serving God through selfishness. Satan is given permission to afflict Job.

(c) Scene on earth. Job afflicted. Job's wife bids him curse God and die. Arrival of Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. Job's complaint.

II. THE DISCUSSION.

There is here brought forth all that the human mind can suggest on the subject of retributive justice apart from revelation.

There are three cycles of speeches and four speakers in each cycle, Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, except in the last cycle where Zophar fails to respond.

(a) First cycle. Ch. 4-14.

The argument is offered by Eliphaz in a speech of great beauty. Job answers him. Bildad and Zophar follow and Job answers each in turn.

The purpose of their argument is to show that sin is the cause of suffering and if a man is sorely afflicted he must have been a great sinner. Applying this principle to Job's case they seek to convince him of some great sin. He, conscious that he has striven to serve God with his whole heart, denies the justice of the position taken by his friends. He argues that righteousness does not always get its reward on this earth or sin its punishment. He can see but one thing clearly; all events and results are in God's hand but of the principles by which they are governed he knows nothing. He asserts his own integrity and that God is just.

(b) Second cycle. Ch. 15-21.

The speakers preserve the same order as before. A more

advanced position is taken by the speakers. Job is held to be actually guilty of some great sin which has produced his suffering; his protests are treated as rebellious struggles and sure tokens of impending destruction.

Job again asserts his integrity; he acknowledges God's hand in his afflictions but denies that they are punishment for his sins. He makes his appeal to God and his Redeemer who will stand at the latter day upon the earth.

(c) Third cycle. 22-31.

In this colloquy all the speakers save Zophar speak in the same order as before. Zophar remains silent.

This cycle shows the opponents of Job at their worst. Still they rally upon the old lines and attempt to show that the punishments with which Job is afflicted are the very ones which would have been meted out to a man who had yielded to the temptations of a person in his position. Job is urged to submit to God which will lead to restored communion and renewed prosperity.

Job in answer repeats his former statements. He further takes a high position in asserting the majesty and power of God. He shows that with all his knowledge man knows little of the unsearchable wisdom of the Creator. Evil will be punished and righteousness vindicated. The discussion ends with this speech of Job.

III. THE SPEECH OF ELIHU. 32-37.

Elihu a young man and a relative of Job now appears upon the scene. He claims that the three friends of Job have failed to prove their charges against him and that Job has maintained his righteousness and arraigned the righteousness of God.

Elihu has a new theory of suffering; he asserts that God by it is instructing men in righteousness and saving them from the commission of sin. No answer is made to this speech by Job or his friends.

IV. THE DIVINE INTERVENTION. 38-41.

Two addresses of the Almighty to Job.

(a) The First address: God speaks to Job out of a whirlwind;

the glory of creation is revealed and Job is made to understand that he ought to know why instincts so strange are given to animals far below man before he attempts to argue with their maker.

(b) The Second address: In this, Job is shown that he who brings a charge of injustice against God should be able to rule the universe and reduce all creatures to order. If man is baffled by the simplest problems how can he contend with God.

V. JOB'S RESTORATION. 42.

Job and his friends are made to see their errors and acknowledge the wisdom, power, justice and glory of God. The three friends who had been unable to arrive at the true solution of Job's fall and suffering are rebuked.

Job is restored to more than his former wealth and position.

XIV.

PSALMS.

THE PSALTER.

This is not one book but five distinct collections of sacred poetry and they contain the work of a number of authors. The hymns and spiritual songs were written during a period of about one thousand years; if the 90th Psalm was written by Moses then this time will be greatly extended.

There are altogether 150 Psalms; 100 bear the names of persons, 16 have headings without names and 34 have no headings. To David are ascribed 73, to Asaph 12, to the sons of Korah 12, to Heman 1, to Ethan 1, to Moses 1 and to Solomon 2.

“The Psalter is a marvellous record of human hearts pouring themselves out from age to age in communion with God.” Here are touched all the vicissitudes of human experience, the depths of human trouble and the heights of joy. There is a world of tenderness towards God which has never been surpassed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEBREW POETRY.

Not rhyme but parallelism was sought for. In the divisions of the verses, the second member carried out, expanded or presented a contrast to the first.

SUBJECTS OF THE PSALMS.

The subjects are so many and so various that it is almost impossible to classify them. They touch upon every human experience and every hope of man; they exploit all phases of Israelitish history and God's dealings with men.

The leading themes are Creation, The King, Jerusalem, The Law, The Messiah, The Future, God's Love Mercy, Justice and Goodness.

The prevailing tone is praise. While some are very joyful, others are sad and plaintive and still others philosophical.

"The law showed what the religion *ought to be*; the prophets tell us very plainly what the religion of their times *was not*; the Psalms indicate what the religion *was* to some." They are animated throughout with the two sentiments of piety and patriotism.

TEACHING.

As the water mirrors the stars, so do these psalms reflect the thoughts of Israel upon great subjects. The authors are not guessing at truths but are positive in their convictions and positive in the statements of their convictions. We note four leading lines of thought.

1. *Representations of God.* These hymns of praise are in marked contrast with heathen hymns and prayers, where a great number of rival deities are worshipped, gods of the sea, air, storm, sun, often monsters of lust and cruelty. In the Psalter there is but *one* God, not unknown, not afar off but present and

near, controlling the sea, the air, the earth. Too much stress cannot be laid upon this difference.

The conception of God's character is pure and lofty. He is a holy God. He is full of tender compassion and sympathy.

2. *Moral and Spiritual.* There is the proper adjustment of the inward and the outward, the spiritual work and the devotional expression. The formalities of religion are necessary but they count for naught without faith in God, purity of heart and a right life.

These Psalms insist upon "single-heartedness, transparent truthfulness and utter absence of guile as the center and mainspring of a moral life, justice, fortitude, self-control, rectitude and sympathy in dealings between man and man."

The sacrifices acceptable to God, even in the day of sacrifices of animals, were a broken and a contrite heart and a desire to deal justly.

3. *The Future.* Though the light is dim in many places and we cannot tell whether a future state is referred to or not, yet in other places there is a strong illumination of this truth. We quote a few passages. The General Judgment. Ps. 1:5. The soul delivered from death. Ps. 33:19. God, the soul's portion forever. Ps. 73:26. Nothing can be more clear than the passages in two of the earliest Psalms of David the 16th and 17th. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Ps. 16:10. "As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." Ps. 17:15.

4. *The Messiah.* We have here Psalms in which it is an open question whether they refer to the Messiah or not. There are also Psalms where there is no question. We have portrayed in these Christ's birth, betrayal, agony, death, triumph over death and His enthronement at the right hand of the Father. See Psalms 22, 45, 110, 2, 16, 20, 21, 45, 72. "One higher and fairer than the sons of men was before their eyes and in their hearts as inspired seers."

ANALYSIS.

THE FIVE DIVISIONS OF THE PSALTER.

These divisions are of great antiquity and have been compared to the five books of the Pentateuch. The end of each division is marked by a doxology.

I. FIRST DIVISION. 1-41.

The authorship of thirty-seven Psalms is ascribed to David and we see reflected in them many circumstances in his life, his faith and his highest aspirations.

II. SECOND DIVISION. Ch. 42-72.

Thirty-one Psalms; the first seven are ascribed to the sons of Korah, one to Asaph, eighteen to David, the rest are anonymous.

This book is remarkable for the fullness of the historical notices.

III. THIRD DIVISION. Ch. 73-89.

Seventeen Psalms; Asaph is said to have written eleven, the sons of Korah four and Heman and Ethan the rest. This book is liturgical in form and is also marked by weighty and numerous historical references.

IV. FOURTH DIVISION. 90-106.

Seventeen Psalms; Moses is made as the author of the 90th Psalm, ten are anonymous, the rest are ascribed to David.

V. FIFTH DIVISION. 107-150.

Forty-four Psalms; thirteen are ascribed to David, one Psalm, to Solomon and the rest are by different authors.

The fourth and fifth books are thought to have been put in shape after the return from the Exile. The 124th Psalm is full of the return from Babylon. Many of the songs breathe the joyful atmosphere of that return.

In the fifth book are fifteen Psalms which bear the title: "A song of degrees." 120-134. "With one exception they are all very short and must have constituted originally a small separate song-book intended apparently for the use of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem to attend the national feasts."

XV.

PROVERBS.

A WISDOM BOOK.

SCOPE. This book is a part of the wisdom literature of the Hebrews. It is not simply a collection of witty and wise sayings but there is in it a distinct philosophy of life. The fundamental idea is that the world is morally governed. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." There are two great problems considered; the moral government of the world and the duty of man in such a world. There are seven marked divisions with separate titles and introductions.

AGE AND AUTHORSHIP.

The book is composed of various collections of of proverbs. Ewald assigns the earliest to the beginning of the eighth century. The names of the most prominent authors and collectors are Solomon, Hezekiah, Agur and king Lemuel.

THE WISE MEN.

The wise men were a distinct class apart from priests and prophets. They were famous in the East. They were keen observers of all the relations of life

This life was not merely the religious life but the mental life, for underneath the latter they saw the divine reality. In their proverbs they used humor and kindly sarcasm. They brought into sharp contrast with each other the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the slothful and the diligent. Pride Anger, Envy, Hatred and Gluttony were unmercifully scored. Supreme trust in God, obedience to parents, the curbing of the tongue, a good character and right dealing in business were urged upon all. So deep is the knowledge of human nature here shown that these wise sayings, although given so long ago, are still as fresh and true to nature as if spoken to-day.

THERE ARE TWO VOICES AND TWO WAYS.

The two voices have each a set of words.

The first voice utters words of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, prudence, subtilty, instruction and discretion.

The second voice utters words of folly, simplicity, brutishness, stupidity, ignorance, and villiany.

Wisdom is personified; she utters her voice in the broad places at the head of the noisy streets. "How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity" and again she takes her stand at the gates of the city where all go out and in. "Blessed are they that keep her ways."

Folly also gives her invitations in the same places "whoso is simple let him turn in hither where stolen waters are sweet and forbidden fruit is tempting" but "her guests are in the depths of hell." This

graphic picture (Ch. 8 and 9) is characteristic of the whole book.

TEACHING.

Negative: There is a notable absence of references to the law, the prophets, the priests, the temple and all that made Israel a peculiar and separate people.

Positive: The absence of references to the law of Israel is no sign that the writers of the proverbs were not acquainted with that law. The morality taught is not the result of observation of good and evil conduct such as we find in Confucius, Hesiod and the proverbs of Arabia but it is identical with the faith of Israel.

The name Jehovah, the symbol of Israel's faith, is constantly mentioned and He is acknowledged as the one supreme ruler. His curse is the most terrible of all penalties; His blessing the highest of all rewards. In looking for the prudential and utilitarian strain which is evident, many have failed to see the spiritual teaching which underlies it. There is here a broad foundation for all the relations of life upon which both Jew and Gentile can stand.

RESULT OF WISDOM STUDY.

"The fear of the Eternal that is wisdom and to depart from evil that is understanding." Man will never climb so high that he will outgrow the need of this elementary lesson of his intellectual primer; with this in view the whole intellectual outlook is changed.

A strong feature of this wisdom literature is that the writers will not admit of a conflict of science and religion. Religion is good sense, mastery of affairs, a well furnished intellect and the best means for the highest ends.

To the Hebrew mind God is in every event, His presence is near, His care over all. There are not two worlds but one, not two lives but one. These thoughts underlying the proverbs make them real and forceful.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE PRAISE OF WISDOM. Ch. 1-9.

The introduction to the collection of proverbs. Ch. 1: 1-7. This is followed not by detached proverbs, but by connected discourses in praise of wisdom. The speaker addresses the hearer as "my son" and the benefits and greatness of wisdom are shown. In the eighth and ninth chapters, wisdom is personified and represented as speaking "displaying her graces and magnifying the delights which she confers on those who follow her."

II. THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON. Ch. 10-22: 16.

This section consists of a large number of wise sayings with no common topic. There is no attempt at classification of the three hundred and seventy-four verses; each contains a single proverb (with one exception, Ch. 19: 7) in two lines.

III. THE SAYINGS OF THE WISE. Ch. 22: 17-24.

These proverbs are by different authors; again, there is no common topic, but the sayings are often comprised in several verses.

IV. A SECOND COLLECTION OF SOLOMON'S PROVERBS.

Ch. 25-29. This division contains probably some of the most ancient proverbs. They were copied by the scribes of King Hezekiah from the remains of the ancient wisdom.

V. THE WORDS OF AGUR. Ch. 30.

"The words are those of one who has striven to find out God unto perfection and found the task above him."

VI. THE WORDS OF KING LEMUEL. Ch. 31: 1-9.

The prophecy that his mother taught him about the duty of kings.

VII. AN ACROSTIC POEM. Ch. 31: 10-31.

In praise of the virtuous woman or the good wife.

XVI.

ECCLESIASTES.

CONTENTS: "This book consists of meditations upon human life and society placed in the mouth of the wise king." "It is mostly written in prose but when the thought becomes elevated we have a poetic form of rhythmic parallelism."

ATTITUDE OF THE BOOK.

At the first look, the author seems to be a pessimist; an evil man turned moralist, of a sour and bitter spirit. He has looked round upon life and been disappointed in friendship and in love. Art, culture and pleasure have failed to soothe him. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." There is an everlasting sameness. All things move in an endless round. "There is nothing new under the sun." Human effort is without result.

But a close study of the book shows that the author has a wise purpose in mind. He gives expression to what many think. He feels the inequalities, the oppressions, the wrongs of life. He sees that even if the aims, the aspirations and the hopes of man are realized on earth, they will fail to satisfy his spirit.

The writer prepares for the higher hope by showing the need of it. In conclusion he says: "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man." The preacher is not crushed by the perplexing problems of life for he feels that he is in fellowship with God who rules over all.

REASON FOR THE BOOK.

This book does not rise to the high position of some of the other books of the Bible and the question has been raised: Why is it in the Bible? Imperfect views of life, as we see it since Christ, are set forth. But the author is no pessimist. He does not believe that the world is growing worse and worse. He retains his faith in God and is conscious of a moral order in the universe. Again the Bible reflects as in a mirror the many sidedness of human thought. "It would seem that there in the great record of the spiritual history of the chosen typical race, a place has been kept for the sigh of defeated hopes; for the gloom of the soul vanquished by the sense of the anomalies and mysteries of human life."

ANALYSIS.

In it three views of life are shadowed forth and discussed.

I. THE PREACHER REVIEWS THE DIFFERENT OBJECTS which men pursue and finds in each only vanity and vexation of spirit. Ch. 1-2.

(a) Labor. Man's work achieves nothing, human activity runs in a circle. Ch. 1: 1-11.

(b) If wisdom is sought, behold this is vanity and vexation of spirit. Ch. 1: 12-18.

(c) Pleasure and riches bring no permanent satisfaction. Ch. 2: 1-11.

(d) The conclusion is that though wisdom is better than folly, yet all is vanity. Ch. 2: 12-26.

II. THERE IS A TIME AND SEASON FOR ALL THINGS. Chs. 3-4.

(a) But who can find out the proper time or be sure he has come upon the right season; hence man's efforts are liable to fail. Ch. 3: 1-11. There is no good in the world but for a man to rejoice and do good in his life. Ch. 3: 13. "That which has been is now and that which is to be hath already been." Ch. 3: 15.

(b) Injustice usurps the place of justice. There is no certainty here of the future and hence little hope of the righting of wrongs hereafter. Ch. 3: 16-22.

(c) Human society is surveyed and only trouble, failure and disappointment are seen. Ch. 4.

III. Ch. 5-12. IN THE FIRST CHAPTERS OF THIS SECTION THE AUTHOR indicates how some of the vexations of life may be escaped. In the last chapter he grandly shows the true aim of all human life and the only foundation for happiness.

(a) Moral and prudential maxims are set forth which teach men how to live rightly so that they will be lifted above the tribulations of the world. Ch. 5. In Ch. 6 the former strain of moralizing is resumed but in the seventh chapter the best way to get on in life is finely treated. Man is to cultivate seriousness in place of frivolity and patience and resignation rather than an over anxious temper ever brooding over the wrongs of life. In Ch. 8 follow more prudential maxims, so in Ch. 9-11.

(b) The conclusion in the twelfth chapter is a beautiful exhortation to "Remember the Creator in youth." The preacher is certain that in God alone will the spirit of man find the satisfaction and joy that it seeks. For God is the solution of all the mysteries of life.

XVII.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

THE SUBJECT is faithful love cast in the form of a lyrical drama. The Book of Job represents a man who was faithful in the midst of great trials which were physically and mentally hard to bear; The Song of Solomon represents a woman in the midst of the seductive temptations of an oriental court faithful to her pledged love. Hence, it has been made the symbol of a faithful church.

INTERPRETATION.

This song has been interpreted as an allegory; by the Jews who made it to embrace the whole of the History of Israel; by the Christians who made Solomon and the Shulamite to represent Christ and His church. The modern critic sees here a love song with a distinct ethical motive. Upon any line of interpretation, there are many difficult passages.

PURPOSE AND TEACHING.

The story is of a country maiden from the north, who attracts the king's attention. She is brought to Jerusalem to enter the Harem.

She is offered every inducement to become a wife

of Solomon, but she refuses and is finally permitted to return to her home and to the lover to whom she has pledged herself.

In the trials to which the Shulamite is subjected there are shown her constancy and devotion to her ideals.

This book is a protest against polygamy, written in a time when it was the almost universal custom.

It is a Voice lifted up for purity of life and a return to the relations ordained of God between men and women in the midst of a corrupt and evil age.

IMAGERY.

Nothing exceeds the beauty of the poetry of this song. It is exquisite. The movement is light and graceful. The references to pastoral scenes are very frequent. Doves hiding in the clefts of the rocks, gazelles leaping over the mountains, trees with varied foliage, flowers with bright hues and richly scented perfume. "We seem to walk with the shepherd lover himself among vineyards and fig trees in the balmy air of spring."

REASON FOR THE BOOK.

There is no reference to the law or the peculiar institutions of the Jews. But in this song of songs there are shining the purity and constancy of a woman's love which grows brighter through the ages. It is an example for all time of the religion of love. There is need that this ideal be held up in all lands; that the monstrous evils that come from lower ideals

be forever cast out from human society. It is not strange that this book has been looked upon as an allegory of the love of Christ and His church.

ANALYSIS.

THERE ARE FOUR QUITE WELL MARKED DIVISIONS. When the book opens the Shulamite has already been brought from her northern home where she attracted the attention of the king. The first scene is laid in the royal palace.

I. FIRST ATTEMPT OF THE KING TO WIN THE LOVE OF THE SHULAMITE.

(a) The Shulamite and the ladies of the court in conversation. 1: 2-8.

(b) Solomon enters and tries to win the maiden's love; he fails for her thoughts are of her absent lover. She begs that no attempt be made to transfer her affection. 1: 9-2: 7.

II. SECOND ATTEMPT OF THE KING to induce this maiden to love him.

(a) The Shulamite recalls scenes from her past life when she was happy with her shepherd lover in her northern home. 2: 8-17. She has a dream in which she seems to go in search of her lover. 3: 1-5.

(b) Solomon is seen approaching in royal state and his glory and greatness are shown the Shulamite. 3: 6-11. But again this maiden refuses the king's love even though he praises her beauty. 4: 1-7. The Shulamite turns away to remember with longing her absent lover. 4: 8-5: 1. Again she dreams that she seeks her beloved in vain throughout the city. 5: 2-8.

III. THIRD ATTEMPT OF THE KING TO WIN THE MAIDEN.

(a) The ladies of the court ask the Shulamite why *her* beloved is more than another; they cannot understand her faithfulness. 5: 9-6: 3.

(b) The king seeks to woo this woman for the last time; praising her beauty again he meets with no greater success than in his former approaches. She declares her love for the absent one and her purpose to remain constant to him. 6: 4-8: 4.

IV. TRIUMPH OF THE SHULAMITE.

She returns to her northern home. She recounts her history and her own purity and constancy. The song closes with expressions of the happiness of the Shulamite and her shepherd lover reunited in their home among the hills. Ch. 8: 5-14.

XVIII.

ISAIAH.

THE PROPHET.

ISAIAH is called the greatest of all the prophets of the Old Testament. His vision is not restricted to his own nation and own times but he regards all nations and all times. "*Nowhere can we find the promise of the Messiah more clearly announced;* nowhere is the kingdom of the Messiah depicted in colors more lifelike and abiding,—his prophesies form, as it were, a bridge between the Old covenant and the New." He received his call in the last year of the reign of king Uzziah. He was married and had two sons. The scene of his labors was in Jerusalem.

PLACE IN THE PROPHETICAL ORDER.

There are sixteen prophetical books in the Old Testament. The prophets are divided as follows:

Under the Monarchy: Israel's Prophets: Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah. Judah's Prophets: Joel, Isaiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah.

Under the Captivity: Ezekiel, Obadiah, Daniel.

In the Restoration: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

TIMES OF ISAIAH.

Position of Northern Israel. When Isaiah began

to prophesy this kingdom under Jeroboam II was outwardly rich and prosperous but inwardly, socially, politically and morally corrupt. It soon went to pieces with a crash and in 721 B. C. the people were conquered and deported by the Assyrians under King Shalmanezer III.

Position of Judah. Isaiah lived under the reigns of four kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. The reigns of Uzziah and Jotham were like the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel. It was an age of oriental magnificence, show and luxury; the poor were oppressed by the rich; the simplicity of the old religion was gone; public morality was relaxed. The boundaries of the kingdom were extended but the old distinctive worship which had made Judah great was disappearing. Ahaz, who followed Jotham, was superstitious and cowardly. Religion reached its lowest ebb. Isaiah lifted his voice in vain against these evils. When the Assyrians threatened the northern kingdom, and the northern kingdom threatened Ahaz, he refused the counsel of Isaiah to keep still and trust God but sought an alliance with the Assyrians which brought about the destruction of Israel and made Judah a vassal of Assyria. Hezekiah, who succeeded Ahaz, introduced reforms; finally listening to Isaiah when the Assyrians again invaded Palestine, Sennacherib's army was destroyed by God before it came to Jerusalem. 701 B. C. Manasseh succeeding Hezekiah undid his good work and permitted the old evils to return.

The great world powers. "The great issues of

the world's secular history were then being fought out by the mighty world powers, Assyria and Egypt." Jerusalem was a strong fortress on the road over which Assyria and Egypt had to pass; this city had been intrusted with the highest of hopes and the great religion of Jehovah. Her policy was to sit still, rely upon Jehovah, be pure and let the storm of war pass by. This was the policy advocated by Isaiah but Jerusalem rejected God and was left to destruction and captivity. Note: For the best account of this struggle see Prof. Sayce's "The Times of Isaiah."

RELIGIOUS IDEAS OF ISAIAH.

"The kingship of Jehovah, the holy majesty of the one true God, the eternal validity of His law of righteousness, the certainty that His cause on earth is imperishable and must triumph over all the wrath of man, that His word of grace cannot be without avail, and the community of His grace is the one thing on earth that cannot be brought to naught."

THE MESSIANIC OUTLOOK.

In chapters 40-66, the prophet advances to a higher outlook. He sees an ideal king who shall reign over both Jew and Gentile in peace and love. Lofty sentiments and high ideals are set forth with such breadth and catholicity of view that we are amazed that they should have come from the pen of a Jew who lived in his people's most troublous times. Christ's work and characteristics as the ideal servant and king are true to life. So accurate are these

pictures that they seem to have been written by one who had actually seen the Master.

ANALYSIS.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN DIVISIONS:

I. Ch. 1-39. Prophecies about Judah and Israel and foreign nations. The great enemy is Assyria.

II. Ch. 40-66. "The book of consolations." The restoration of Israel. The Messianic king. The great enemy is Babylon.

I. FIRST DIVISION: THIS MAY BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR PARTS, Ch. 1-39.

(a) Ch. 1-12. Discourses relating to Judah and Israel. (1.) Ch. 1-6. "The great arraignment" of the people for their sins. The land was full of idolatry, immorality, and evils of all kinds. The sins of the people are denounced; the consequence of persistence in them is shown to be a sure destruction. Ch. 6. Isaiah's call.

(2.) Ch. 7-10:4. Relate to the reign of king Ahaz of Judah. In chapter 7, Ahaz being threatened by Pekah, king of Israel, refuses the advice of Isaiah to trust in God and calls upon Assyria for aid. Isaiah foretells the desolation that shall come upon the whole land for this rejection of God.

In ch. 8 there is plainly set forth the condition of things after the Assyrians had come and overrun Israel but had not yet taken Damascus. Yet even in these dark times when men's hearts were failing them from fear, the prophet breaks forth into a magnificent prediction (Ch. 9: 1-7) of the future glory of God's people and the reign of the Messianic king. The prophet now shows the miserable reality of the present, in contrast to that glorious picture, in a prophecy addressed to the northern kingdom (Ch. 9: 8-10: 4.) "For wickedness burneth as a fire." Ch. 9: 18.

(3.) Ch. 10: 5-12. A prediction that the power of Assyria shall be broken and that there shall be established in Zion a kingdom of righteousness under a perfect king of David's line. See Ch. 11 and 12 for this wonderful prophecy.

(b) Ch. 13-27. Prophecies about foreign nations: These chapters show the grand outlook of Isaiah. Assyria, Babylon,

Egypt, Tyre, Damascus, etc. are mentioned and definite predictions made in regard to their destinies. All that Isaiah foretold about them has come to pass. Ch. 24-27. "Present vividly and strongly the divine judgment upon the world and the redemption of God's people."

(c) Ch. 28-35. Relations of Judah to Egypt and Assyria. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, is preparing to invade Palestine. Hezekiah, in fear sends ambassadors to Egypt for help. Isaiah protests against this course of action and urges reliance upon God. He predicts the fall of Samaria and shows the utter folly of trusting in Egypt. Ch. 31. The prophet sees in vision the great deliverance that was to be wrought in behalf of Judah. In the 35th ch. he again sings of the glory of the Messianic kingdom.

(d) Ch. 36-39. The great deliverance of Jerusalem. An historical section (Ch. 36-37) relating the defeat of the king of Egypt at Eltekah by the Assyrians and the destruction of the Assyrian army before the walls of Jerusalem as Isaiah had predicted. Ch. 38-39. The story of the recovery of Hezekiah from his sickness by the prayer of Isaiah. Ambassadors come from Babylon to congratulate Hezekiah upon his recovery and he foolishly shows them all his treasures. Isaiah predicts the Babylonian captivity.

II. SECOND DIVISION. THIS MAY BE DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS. Ch. 40-66.

(a) Ch. 40-48. "The certainty of the coming release." The standpoint here is the Babylonian captivity and the prophet is predicting the restoration of Judah and the coming of the Messianic King (under the figure of the Ideal Servant). He not only prophesies but he argues that this restoration must take place.

From the power of Jehovah and His ability to fulfil all his promises (Ch. 40-41). God will send His "Servant" (42: 1-7) who will be the means of Israel's restoration and teach the world true religion. In this word "Servant" (used with this meaning) we have not an historic nation but an ideal figure which we believe to be Christ. In the remaining chapters of this section the righteousness and holiness of Jehovah are set forth.

(b) Ch. 49-59. The Ideal King. The people are exhorted to fit themselves morally for the coming release and respond to Jehovah's call. Ch. 49. Fresh features are added to the portrait of Jehovah's Servant. The prophet makes the distinction very clear between Israel as a servant and this servant as the Ideal King, the Messiah; the latter is represented as speaking and announcing the twofold nature of His mission.

Ch. 50. "Once more this 'Servant' (the Messiah) speaks describing His divine equipment, His vocation, His experience of shameful rebuff and persecution, His certainty of ultimate triumph in the divine strength."

Ch. 51. The approaching restoration of Israel.

Ch. 52-53. The Ideal Servant (Messiah) is represented as perfectly fulfilling His mission. "It shows how the work must be accomplished in the face of misunderstanding, opposition and persecution; how redemption can only be achieved through vicarious suffering." But the ultimate victory is sure.

Ch. 54-55. A gracious invitation for all to prepare for the coming of the Lord.

Ch. 56-59. The necessity of repentance and sanctification is set forth in order to receive the blessing of God.

(c) Ch. 60-66. The Ideal Kingdom. There is here a decided advance in thought. Ch. 60. The prophet sets forth in "still brighter hues the felicity of the ideal Zion of the future."

Ch. 61-66. "Jehovah's Ideal Servant is again introduced and His gracious mission to 'bring good tidings to the afflicted and proclaim liberty to the captives' is graphically shown; then follows a picture of Israel's restoration. A judgment is proclaimed for the disobedient and sinful. The prophecy of the restored Jerusalem "is radiant with a splendor which is more than earthly." No house can contain the glory of God for heaven & His throne and the earth is His footstool."

XIX.

JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS.

CONTENTS.

1. *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* is a combination of History, Biography and Prophecy.

It marks the utter destruction of a Holy City and Sanctuary and closes the period of the monarchy.

It treats of the death agony of a nation and that nation the chosen people of God.

Jeremiah's mission was a sad one, "his office was like that of the minister obliged to accompany a criminal to the scaffold." Judah had disobeyed God's law and turned a deaf ear to all invitations and warnings to return; the end was approaching. Jeremiah was of an emotional and sensitive nature and his work might have caused the stoutest heart to shrink from the task.

2. *The Book of Lamentations* "consists of five independent poems all dealing with the calamities that befell the people of Judah and Jerusalem in consequence of the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans."

JEREMIAH'S LIFE AND CALL.

Life. Jeremiah was of priestly descent and lived in

the little village of Anathoth a short distance north of Jerusalem. His book contains abundant notices of how he lived and the treatment he received. He was commanded not to marry and to form no social ties. Pashur, the priest, caused him to be brutally treated and put into the stocks, (Ch. 20) king Johoia-kim contemptuously cuts his written roll of prophecy and throws it into the fire (Ch. 36). Never did a man who loved his country and his God have more indignities heaped upon him for trying to be faithful to both.

Call. The prophet's call took place in the 13th year of the reign of king Josiah 626 B. C. and five years before the book of the law was found in the temple. The call was not only to Judah but to the nations and kingdoms "to root out and pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." An old order of things was to pass away and a new one to begin.

STATE OF JUDAH.

The northern kingdom had been carried into captivity and Judah stood alone.

Political and Religious Conditions King Josiah came to the throne in 639 B. C. The nation was in a bad state. Through the preaching of the prophets Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel and especially Jeremiah the king undertook great reforms; the temple was cleansed, the Book of the Law found and outwardly all seemed well. Josiah after a reign of 31 years was slain at the battle of Megiddo by Necho, king of Egypt. Then began again the descent which had been only checked by king Josiah. Jehoahaz

who succeeded him was deposed by Pharaoh Necho and his elder brother Jehoiakim placed on the throne; this king, selfish, luxurious and indifferent to the wants of the nation treated with contempt the religion of Jehovah. He despised the preaching of Jeremiah and threw his prophecies into the fire.

In 597 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon invaded Judah and took the city of Jerusalem. Jehoiakim having died during the siege, his son and successor, Jehoiachin, was taken to Babylon. Many nobles and artisans were carried into captivity at this time. Nebuchadnezzar placed Zedekiah on the throne of Judah to rule over the remnant left in Jerusalem. Zedekiah, after some years, revolting, Nebuchadnezzar came a second time, 586 B. C., before the city with his army and tore down the walls, razing the temple to the ground. Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah did evil continually, idolatry was openly practiced, flagrant sins were committed in church and state. Jehovah's religion was neglected and despised. Jeremiah sought in vain to stay this tide of evil by warnings, entreaties and judgments. The people were infatuated with their sins. The city was doomed yet in this time of gloom the prophet utters some of his most glorious Messianic prophecies and predicts that after seventy years the captivity will end and the people will be restored to their land and city.

THE WORLD POWERS.

It was a time of the crash of empires and great changes.

When Jeremiah was born, Assyria and Egypt were disputing the sovereignty of the world. Before Jerusalem was destroyed, Assyria's power had been shattered by Babylon. Egypt under Pharaoh Necho daring to dispute the might of this new world power suffered a disastrous defeat at the battle of Carchemish in 604 B. C. Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar was now mistress of the world. Jeremiah whose message was to the nations foresaw these changes and looked even beyond them; he predicted that even great Babylon after seventy years should fall and a new power take its place. It seemed to him the very height of folly for Judah who would not trust in God to attempt to contend with a world empire. He looked beyond the present great nations; beyond the present Judah, disobedient and ungrateful, and saw the rise of a kingdom greater than all, under a king who should sit upon the throne of David and execute judgment and justice. He saw the bringing in of a new covenant where there should be no outward temple but the righteous law should be written on the hearts of men.

ANALYSIS.

JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS.

JEREMIAH.

I. INTRODUCTION. Ch. 1.

The prophet's call while still a youth. He is charged with a mission not only to Judah but to all nations. Tidings of woe to his own people.

II. Ch. 2-6. JUDAH'S SINS SET FORTH.

Discourses preached before Josiah's Reform. The sins of ingratitude, idolatry, impenitence and immorality.

III. Ch. 7-10. CALL TO REPENTANCE.

Jeremiah stands in the Gate of the Temple and calls upon his people to repent; to put not their trust in the Temple but in a pure heart and a right life. Ch. 7: 21-23. Calamities are sure to come unless they heed the warning. The prophet weeps over their sins. Ch. 9. He calls their attention to the utter insignificance of dead idols compared to the living God. Ch. 10.

IV. 11-13. THE APPEAL TO THE COVENANT.

A covenant had been made between God and His people. This discourse was doubtless delivered just after the finding of the law in Josiah's reign. 2 Chr. 34: 15. Ch. 12. The consequence of disobeying the law will be destruction. Ch. 12. A linen girdle is made the type of the destruction of the land through sin. Ch. 13.

V. Ch. 14-22. REJECTION AND CAPTIVITY FORETOLD.

These discourses and prophecies were given after the failure of the reform under Josiah and probably during the reign of Jehoiakim.

A great famine desolates the land, which Jeremiah uses as a type of the coming destruction. Ch. 14. Judah's rejection and captivity plainly set forth. Ch. 15-17.

God's power over nations shown under the type of the potter. Ch. 18-19. Pashur, the priest, does not like the prophecies of Jeremiah; he brutally maltreats him; for this he receives a fearful doom. Ch. 20. Jeremiah tells Zedekiah that Nebuchadnezzar will take Jerusalem and that the people will be sent into captivity. Ch. 21. The judgments pronounced upon the kings of Jeremiah's time. Ch. 22.

VI. Ch. 23-29. RESTORATION OF THE REMNANT.

As clearly as Jeremiah foretells the captivity, he also prophesies a return to Jerusalem of a portion of the people. Ch. 23. In 28: 5-6 he predicts the reign of the Messianic king. He shows the return under the type of the figs. Ch. 24. This return is to take place at the end of seventy years. Ch. 25. In the year 604 after the great battle of Carchemish when the Babylonians broke the power of the Egyptians, Jeremiah saw near at hand the destruction of Jerusalem which was to begin this captivity. Ch. 26 which

by some is thought to be out of place here shows how the people received Jeremiah's message of the captivity. In Chapters 27-28, the prophet predicts that even the vessels of the Temple shall be restored; he has a contest with the false prophets who deceive the people. Ch. 29 is a letter written by Jeremiah telling the captives in Babylon not to be deceived about the return and not to expect it until the close of the seventy years.

VII. Ch. 30-33. BOOK OF CONSOLATIONS.

These discourses and prophecies were uttered during the last siege of Jerusalem to comfort the people with the certainty that a remnant should return and Jerusalem be rebuilt. There is promised a *New Covenant* depending not on outward law but upon a principle operative within the heart. Ch. 31:31-34. In the 32 Ch. Jeremiah shows his confidence in the return by buying a field in Anathoth. In Ch. 33 the purification and restoration of the nation are shown. Nothing exceeds in beauty the picture of the glory of the reign of the Messianic king given in Ch. 33:14-22.

VIII. Ch. 34-45. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

This took place in 586 B. C. under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Ch. 34 shows the state of the city at the time of the siege; Jeremiah prophesies its sure overthrow. Ch. 35 and 36 are out of place, chronologically and belong to the reign of Jehoiakim. They relate the incidents of the Rechabites and the burning of the prophet's writings by King Jehoiakim. In Ch. 37-45, we have Jeremiah's personal history during and after the siege of Jerusalem; the circumstances of his being placed in a dungeon; the favor shown him by Nebuchadnezzar; his sojourn and work in Egypt.

IX. Ch. 46-51. PROPHECIES ABOUT FOREIGN NATIONS.

These prophecies are closely connected with chapter 25. They were probably uttered at different times and are here gathered in one group. They survey the whole field of nations known in Jeremiah's time. The prophet foretells the downfall of Egypt; the wasting of the country of the Philistines; the desolation of Moab and Ammon; the successful siege of the mountain fort-

resses of Edom; the taking of Damascus, and that Kedar and Elam are to be scattered to the winds. In Ch. 50-51, the prophet foretells the downfall of Babylon and the rise of another power.

X. Ch. 52. HISTORICAL CONCLUSION.

Account of the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and the exile of its inhabitants.

THE LAMENTATION OF JEREMIAH.

The subject of these poems is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. There are five poems, each with a different subject.

I. Ch. 1. THE MISERY AND AFFLICTION OF JERUSALEM.

Her treasures and her glory have departed; her people are in exile. She acknowledges the righteousness of God and the justice of her destruction.

II. Ch. 2. THE CAUSE OF THE PEOPLE'S SUFFERINGS.

Jehovah has become their enemy. The nation is urged to entreat the favor of God.

III. Ch. 3. THE GROUND OF CONSOLATION.

"We have set before us the image of the deepest suffering passing on to the confession of sin, the acknowledgment of God's justice and the prayer of faith for forgiveness."

IV. Ch. 4. THE PRESENT AND PAST CONTRASTED.

There is no escape from the punishment of the people's sin; but with repentance will come restoration.

V. Ch. 5. THE FINAL APPEAL FOR GOD'S COMPASSIONATE REGARD.

The nation's sufferings are acknowledged as a fruit of sin. An earnest prayer is made to God for restoration to favor.

XX.

EZEKIEL.

CONTENTS.

In this book there are three great groups of prophecies all carefully wrought out.

The subjects are: The Downfall of Judah and Jerusalem; The Judgments upon Seven Foreign Nations and Cities; and the Glorious Restoration of Israel. The peculiarity of the book is in its visions, allegories, parables and similitudes. While the general subjects are very plain, the meaning of the symbols is not always clear.

LIFE AND CALL OF THE PROPHET.

Life. Ezekiel was the son of Buzi. He was of priestly descent and was carried captive into Babylonia with Jehoiachin, the king, after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar 597 B. C. He lived at Tel-abib on the river Chebar and had a house of his own where the elders of Judah used to meet. His wife died in the ninth year of his exile. Ch. 24: 18. He prophesied about twenty-two years. He was held in honor and esteem. He had great strength of character.

Call. The call came in the fifth year on the fifth

day of the fourth month of King Jehoiachin's captivity. Ch. 1: 2.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND OTHER PROPHETS.

The history of the times is the same as that under the prophet Jeremiah. Ezekiel has substantially the same message.

The prophets of this period are Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Jeremiah began to prophesy about thirty-four years before Ezekiel and continued to do so six or seven years after his first vision. Daniel commenced his work in the third year of king Jehoiachin's captivity and long survived Ezekiel.

PROMINENT IDEAS OF THE PROPHET.

Removed from his native land and far away from the conflict going on in Jerusalem, Ezekiel reveals to us the great thoughts and principles for which he stood.

The terrible nature and power of sin to overthrow, tear down and destroy men and nations. The destruction of Jerusalem, of Israel and Judah is through sin.

The power and majesty of Jehovah. See Ch. 1, etc. He cannot abide sin. Jehovah is God over all nations. See 2d Division of the Book.

Individual Responsibility. He distinctly asserts that men do not suffer for anyone's sins but their own. Ch. 18: 2 ff. and 33: 10 ff.

The new order of things which he proclaims will be based upon an individual heart religion "yet if

will be a Messianic kingdom with David as prince forever." Ch. 37: 24-25.

VISIONS AND SYMBOLS.

There has been much discussion in regard to their interpretation. Various methods have been applied to them; none are without their difficulties. The great temple, as Ezekiel saw it in his vision has not been built although some of its features were embodied in the temple built by the returning exiles. Between the visions and symbols of this book and those of Revelation there is a strong resemblance, viz: The Throne and He that sitteth on it; it is surrounded by ineffable brightness; a rainbow encircles it and four living creatures attend it. We have the same figures of wicked Babylon; the forces under Gog and Magog. There is a judgment of the nations. We have here a Temple and there a city but both are four square, and are measured with a reed. Each is resplendent with the glory of God. Ezekiel and John were lifted up to see the greatness of God in time to come. It is one conflict waged from the first against sin and evil. But there is no doubt of the final victory to those who trust in God. Ezekiel has not only *an* end in view of the destruction of Jerusalem, of the end of the captivity, but *the* end of all things. See Ch. 7 and 26.

THE CAPTIVITY.

There are two captivities. The first when King Jehoiachin with over 10,000 people were deported to

Babylonia and the second, eleven years afterwards (586 B. C.) when the city and Temple were utterly destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel and Daniel were carried away in the first captivity.

Political and Social Condition of the Jews. The Jews were treated not as slaves but as colonists. They could and did rise to the highest offices. They increased in numbers and in wealth. The Mosaic law was observed and the genealogical tables preserved. When they returned, the exiles were headed by a son of David, Prince Zerubbabel.

Religious Outlook. The exiles were allowed religious freedom. It is believed that Synagogue worship began during the exile. (Ezekiel 8:1; 14:1; 20:1.) The captivity marks a new era in the spiritual history of the Jews. Idolatry ceased and a passionate devotion to Jehovah's cause took its place. The Sacred Books were carefully sought out; the canon revised and held in a reverence that is very marked; new books were added to the number already held as sacred. The different tribes dropped their petty politics and were united in one faith.

ANALYSIS.

THERE ARE THREE DIVISIONS IN THIS BOOK.

I. Ch. 1-14. PREDICTIONS OF THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

Ezekiel in captivity, did what Jeremiah was doing in Jerusalem, predicted the destruction of the Holy City.

(a) Ch. 1-7. The call of Ezekiel; the vision of Jehovah. The nature of the prophet's work. The rebellious nation. The impending ruin of the city. Ch. 1-3. The siege of the city and the certainty of judgment. Ch. 4-7. This prophecy (Ch. 1-7)

was given in 592 B. C. or six years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

(b) Ch. 8-19. The condition of the city and sins of the people. A prophecy uttered in 591 B. C. The greatness of the iniquity; the vision of the six men and the coals of fire; the vine and adulteress. Ch. 8-16. The Messianic outlook; the futility of help from Egypt. Ch. 17. The people to suffer for their own sins. Ch. 18-19.

(c) Ch. 20-24. Renewed reproofs and predictions of coming ills, 590 B. C., four years before the ruin of the city. The goodness of God and the wickedness of this people shown from history. Mercy and goodness having failed the sword is now the only remedy. Ch. 20-21. The terrible crimes committed in the city. Ch. 22. Judah and Israel have acted like two evil women. Ch. 23. Ch. 24 is a prophecy uttered two years before the fall of the city showing that the end is very near.

II. Ch. 25-32. PREDICTIONS IN REGARD TO FOREIGN NATIONS.

Seven nations form the subject of these prophecies: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt. Ezekiel is no exception in his survey of other nations. Jehovah is declared the Supreme God of all nations by many of the prophets. At this time the peoples round about the Holy City were saying that Jehovah could not save and defend His chosen people and they pointed the finger of scorn at Him. The prophet emphatically declares that it is not through the weakness of Jehovah but as a punishment for sin that the city has fallen. He then proceeds to predict the terrible fate of these nations which will come through their corruption.

These prophecies extend over eighteen years from 588 to 570 B. C. and are collected in one group. In Ch. 25-28:23 the fate of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre and Sidon is set forth. In Ch. 28:24-26 there are a few verses showing the wonderful restoration of Israel. In Ch. 29-32 there are six prophecies about Egypt showing the complete ruin of that great empire. No restoration is promised for these peoples but for the chosen nation the case is entirely different; the triumphant song of a new life begins the moment when everything seems lost.

III. Ch. 33-48. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL.

Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B. C. and the first part of Ezekiel's prophecies fulfilled. In a year he begins with equal certainty to predict a brilliant return. So great are these prophecies and visions of Temple, city, land and people that it is quite evident that the prophet not only has in mind the restoration which came at the end of seventy years, but also that greater triumph which has come and is still coming since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (compare Christ's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Matt. 24). We find in these last chapters a looking forward to the triumph of the Messianic kingdom.

(a) Ch. 33-35. Jehovah Triumphant. The equity of God's dealings; His care for His flock. He is God over all and is alone able to carry out His plans.

(b) Ch. 36-39. The restoration of the land and return of the people. The renewed fertility and beauty of the land. Ch. 36. Israel though dead shall live again. The vision of the resurrection of dry bones. Ch. 37. Great hordes of men organized on a gigantic scale seek to destroy the new kingdom but signally fail. Ch. 38-39.

(c) Ch. 40-47. The Ideal Temple. In 572 B. C. or fourteen years after the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel had a vision of a magnificent temple, which may be compared to the view St. John had of the New Jerusalem. The form and dimensions of this glorious building are given. Ch. 40-42. The prophet sees God in His glory come to this house as he has seen Him depart from Solomon's Temple; the ordinances of worship are plainly shown. But everything is on so vast a scale that it is quite evident that Ezekiel is looking forward to a time when all nations shall bow before that descendant of David whom we call Christ. 43-46. The vision of the great stream of water, coming from the altar at first in a little rivulet, which was to bless the land and people, shows again the symbolical character of these chapters. (See Revelation. The River of the Water of Life.)

(d) Ch. 48. The Ideal Allotment of Land. The division of

land is here so made as to show the Temple in the center of the tribal portions; signifying that God will now dwell in the midst of His people.

XXI.

DANIEL

CONTENTS.

The Book of Daniel consists of twelve chapters; six relating his history and six his dreams and visions, yet it marks a new era in the history of the Jews. The nation is reduced from an independent kingdom, though small, to a sub-province in a mighty empire. But this seeming subordination only lifts the Jew and his religion to a higher place and a grander outlook. Daniel has under survey not the destiny of the Jew but the course of empires. The "Son of David" has risen to the title of "Son of Man" whose kingdom shall succeed all kingdoms and whose dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away. Ch. 7: 13-14.

THE PROPHET.

Daniel was a noble youth taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar. He was received into the palace and educated by order of the king. He first came into notice through his interpretation of the dream (Ch. 2.) of King Nebuchadnezzar. He held the highest government posts under the Chaldean, Median and Persian dynasties. He lived through the

whole period of the captivity and saw the return under King Cyrus. As a man he was very devout; as a statesman and prophet few if any equal him.

THE WORLD EMPIRES.

The great kingdoms of the dreams and visions of this book are:

The Babylonian or Chaldean Empire, B. C. 625-536. It was raised to greatness by Nebuchadnezzar.

The Persian Empire, B. C. 536-330. Its power began with Cyrus the Great under whom the Jews returned to Jerusalem.

The Empire of the Greeks, B. C. 330-321. Alexander the Great in a brilliant series of battles subdued the entire Persian world. At his death the kingdom was divided into four parts under four of his generals.

B. C. 323-198. Palestine and Jerusalem was brought under the rule of Ptolemy Soter, King of Egypt and his successors. Ptolemy Soter was one of the four of Alexander's generals who succeeded to his empire.

B. C. 198-166. By the battle of Mt. Panium, Antiochus Epiphanes wrested Palestine and Jerusalem from Egypt. He was a fearful persecutor of the Jews. He did everything he could to destroy the worship of Jehovah. The Temple was desecrated and closed, Jerusalem was twice sacked and the Jewish religion forbidden; cruel persecutions were instituted against its followers.

B. C. 166-40. Period of Maccabean Independence. *The Roman Empire*, B. C. 40, set aside the Mac-

cabean line and made Herod the Great, king over Jerusalem. In the closing portion of his reign Jesus Christ was born.

OUTLOOK.

Daniel in his outlook is much more comprehensive than the earlier prophets. His view is of a succession of empires. "He shows how their sequence is determined before God and declares that when the appointed limit is reached they are overthrown by God." He grasps the great idea of a world state ruled over by principles of justice and right under the Messianic King. He views past, present and future as a comprehensive whole. There is here outlined a religious philosophy of history. The Jews saw this succession of empires and asked when will it cease? When will the time come for the dawn of better things? This Daniel showed in his visions and dreams of great empires and of the stone overturning the image and the coming of "the Son of Man," the Great King.

TEACHING.

The purpose of this book is not simply to narrate the life of Daniel and his visions but there is a very definite line of teaching. It is designed to magnify Jehovah. He can deliver his servants; the incidents of the fiery furnace and the lion's den. He will have no idol worship before Him; Belshazzar's feast. He is God over all nations. The image which Nebuchadnezzar saw destroyed by a "stone cut out without

hands." The Messiah is mentioned by name. There is no mistaking the teaching about the resurrection. Ch. 12: 2-3. Daniel's God is the God of all nations, omniscient, omnipotent, pure, righteous and just.

ANALYSIS.

This book naturally falls into two parts: the historical and the prophetic.

I. Ch. 1-6. THE HISTORICAL SECTION.

The story of Daniel under the reign of three kings, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius.

(a) Ch. 1. Keeping the faith.

Daniel and three companions are taken into captivity. They are selected to receive their food from the king's table and to be educated at his expense. Desiring to avoid defilement from eating the meat which may have been offered before idols they request that pulse and water be given them. Their petition is granted. They were true to their religion and convictions when it was difficult to be faithful and might have seriously injured their prospects.

(b) Ch. 2. The Dream of Great Empires and the Interpretation.

Nebuchadnezzar dreams and forgets his dream. No interpreter can be found except Daniel, to whom God has revealed the dream and the meaning.

1. The Dream: A great image with head of fine gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay. A stone cut out without hands which smote the image upon its feet and destroyed it.

2. The Interpretation. Daniel's interpretation is that the head of gold is Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom; three kingdoms are to follow (names not given). But all will be destroyed by the kingdom of God to come (in Christ). Now what are the intermediate kingdoms? The traditional view is as follows: The head of gold=the Chaldean Empire. The breast and arms of silver=Medo-Persian. The belly and thighs of brass=

the empire of the Greeks. The legs of iron and feet of iron and clay=the Roman empire and its division into two parts with capitals at Rome and Constantinople. The stone which destroyed the image=the kingdom of Christ which will become the universal kingdom.

Another and more recent view held by some is that the silver represents the Medes; the brass the Persians and the iron the Greeks which finally issued in the two kingdoms of the Ptolemies and Selucidæ. This would bring the time referred to near the advent of Christ who is the stone cut out without hands; the universal king.

(c) Ch. 3. The Fiery Furnace and The Faithful Three.

The story of the three companions of Daniel who refused to worship the great golden idol of the King. They were cast into a fiery furnace only to be delivered by their God.

(d) Ch. 4. The Great Tree and the Stricken King.

King Nebuchadnezzar has a vision of a great tree cut down to the stump. Daniel interprets it to mean that the king will become a madman. This was a warning to repent: but we are told in vs. 29-30 at the end of twelve months the king lifting himself up as the creator is smitten and driven forth as a lunatic. God alone is Creator and omnipotent.

(e) Ch. 5. The Impious Feast of Belshazzar.

This king at a great feast sacrilegiously calls for the golden vessels taken from Solomon's temple to be brought and drinking wine from them praises the gods of gold and silver and brass. A warning handwriting appears on the wall. Daniel is called to interpret and declares the doom of king and kingdom. God is the only living Eternal God; He will have no idols before Him.

(f) Ch. 6. The Mouths of Lions Stopped.

Through envy at his exalted position, the great officials of the empire of Darius conspire to ruin Daniel and take his life. For praying to his God contrary to the king's decree he is cast into a den of lions only to be signally delivered. God is able to save His servants under the hardest circumstances.

II. THE PROPHETICAL SECTION.

The Visions of Daniel:

(a) Ch. 7. The Vision of the Four Beasts. In a vision or dream the prophet sees four wild beasts coming up from a tempestuous sea: a lion, a bear, a leopard and a dreadful beast with great iron teeth and ten horns; among the ten horns comes up a little horn before which three horns are plucked up by the roots. At the end the judgment scene is depicted and (vs. 13 and 14) all power is given unto the Son of Man (Christ). This vision is taken as another version of the vision of the empires given in ch. 2. and the same views of its meaning are taken, the only difference being that the symbolism of the fourth kingdom is more developed. By the traditional view the ten horns signify the European powers which succeeded the Roman empire. The little horn is an anti-christian power destined to rise out of them in the future which will be overcome by Christ. On the other hand the ten horns are said to represent the successors of Alexander the great and the little horn the king Antiochus Epiphanes who so terribly persecuted the Jews; he offered a swine upon the altar of sacrifices; he died about 163 B. C. With either view Christ is conceded to be the king who is to overthrow all kingdoms.

(b) Ch. 8. The Ram and He Goat.

Daniel has a vision of a ram with two horns who is overcome by a he goat with one horn and of four notable ones which came up toward the four winds of heaven, followed by one horn which waxed very great. The interpretation is given by the angel Gabriel: The Ram=the Medo-Persian Empire; the he goat=the empire of the Greeks; the four horns=the four kingdoms into which the former kingdom was divided, and the little horn a king of fierce countenance and mighty power. He is a great persecutor. This king thus described exactly tallies with the reign and character of Antiochus Epiphanes and he is generally acknowledged to be that monarch.

(c) Ch. 9. The Seventy Weeks.

A prayer of the prophet when he remembers that the seventy

years of captivity spoken of by Jeremiah are nearing the end. He prays God to forgive the sins of His people and look favorably on His sanctuary. An angel approaches him while praying and tells him what will take place before the Messiah appears and when He comes. It is evident that He wishes to show Daniel that the time is not yet at hand but the surety of His coming. The numbers have been the despair of all commentators; the difficulty is to know what chronology the author followed and how his numbers were computed. There is in the 26th v. a remarkable forecast of the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

(d) Ch. 10-12. The Last Vision.

After Daniel had fasted for 21 days an angel appeared to him to give him another revelation. In Ch. 11, we have a brief but comprehensive outlining of the course of events. The end of the Persian empire, the rise of the kingdom of the Greeks and its fall, the four kingdoms which followed with the contests of the Selucidæ and Ptolemies and the career of the king Antiochus Epiphanes. In Ch. 12 vs. 1-3 we have an instance, not uncommon, of the prophetic vision passing from the immediate future to one infinitely distant. Nothing can be plainer than this picture of the resurrection of the just and the unjust. The last section of this chapter contains strong words of encouragement. Daniel seeks to know the end of the time but is bidden to wait. Although numbers are given yet Daniel does not seem to comprehend them.

XXII. HOSEA.

PLACE AND CONTENTS.

This book heads the list and is the longest of the Minor Prophets. Hosea was a prophet of the northern kingdom. He delivered his message during the latter part of the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel and in the troublous times that followed his death. What Jeremiah was afterwards to Judah, Hosea was in his day to Israel. He saw Israel steeped in sin and destruction impending. He denounced the sins of his people and pleaded with them in vain. With a sore heart he proclaimed the doom of his nation: captivity and extinction of the national life. The date of the book is 746-735 B. C.

THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET.

Hosea was a citizen of Israel. Of the details of his life we know little except what he tells us. He shows an intimate acquaintance with the geography, history and customs of his nation. His private life was unfortunate: his wife an evil woman whom he seeks to reclaim. She leaves him. He finds her again in a slave market where she had been sent for sale. In buying her and bringing her back to his home he shows symbolically what God has done and

will do again for Israel. As he has been wounded by the conduct of his unfaithful wife, so is God hurt by the backsliding of Israel. "Hosea was a younger contemporary of Amos and an older contemporary of Isaiah and Micah."

HISTORY OF THE TIMES.

Jeroboam II was king of Israel when Hosea began to prophesy. He was the fourth and greatest king of the dynasty founded by Jehu who overthrew the dynasty of Omri. *Outwardly* it was a time of prosperity. The borders of the land were enlarged; Syria and Moab were conquered; commerce and trade flourished; the offerings to the temple were large. *Inwardly* the nation was decaying. Baal worship was taking the place of Jehovah worship and licentious rites were being introduced. Gross immorality was increasing. There was a widening gulf between the classes. The masses were crushed by the cruel oppression of their masters. When Jeroboam II died the crash came. Zechariah his son reigned only for six months when he was murdered by a conspiracy. In him the house of Jehu came to an end. The prophets Elijah and Elisha had pronounced the doom of the dynasty of Omri for the evil that it did. In like manner Amos and Hosea pronounced the doom of the dynasty of Jehu. After Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah and Hoshea succeeded each other on the throne. This period is the saddest part of Israel's history ; we see its evils reflected in Hosea, Ch. 4-14. The great

Empire of Assyria was advancing to crush Israel, who being bereft of her only hope in God by her sins, was left to her fate. Hosea failed to save the nation from the Assyrian captivity because it would not listen to him.

TEACHING.

The country was seemingly prosperous when Hosea began to prophesy; before his death the evils within the commonwealth had broken out. Israel forgot God and the result is seen in.

Political Apostacy. She seeks God no longer in her extremity but Assyria and Egypt. Ch. 7: 11.

Religious Apostacy. The substitution of calf worship and Baal worship for that of Jehovah. Ch. 8: 5-7.

Moral Apostacy Swearing, lying, killing, stealing. Ch. 4: 2.

Covenant Apostacy. The law is forgotten. Ch. 4: 6. For these sins judgment is close at hand. Ch. 9: 17. Israel is punished not because God is hard or unmerciful but because of sins. Ch. 10.

God's love and His desire to restore and save this people is magnificently shown in ch. 12. The root idea in this prophecy is "Jehovah's loving faithfulness to Israel and Israel's unfaithfulness to Jehovah." The covenant, close as the marriage tie, has been broken not by God but by this people. Hosea teaches for all time that "a social order that is unrighteous, a religious worship that is immoral and a national existence based on earthly greatness must fall."

ANALYSIS.

THERE ARE TWO PARTS TO THIS BOOK: Ch. 1-3 belong to the time of Jeroboam II king of Israel, and ch. 4-14 belong to the kings following him.

I. Ch. 1-3. UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL.

Ch. 1. The state of the chosen people is symbolized by the prophet taking an evil woman to be his wife. Three children are born whose names signify God's reprobation of Israel. Yet (verses 2-11.) Jehovah will have mercy and save His people. In ch. 2, under the type of the evil woman, Israel is seen departing from God. She will receive the full reward of her wickedness. But the period of punishment will be the means of her reformation and restoration. In ch. 3 the prophet is represented as receiving back his wife after she had been cast out by those to whom she had gone. He does this through love. So God will receive Israel again because He loves the chosen nation.

God is shown to be more faithful than the nation.

II. Ch. 4-14. SIN, PUNISHMENT, REPENTANCE, RESTORATION.

A series of prophecies and discourses delivered after the death of Jeroboam II when Israel was hastening to her extinction as a nation.

(a) Ch. 4-8. Israel's sin. The charges made here are no light ones. "Swearing, lying, killing, stealing," idolatries of the most evil sort. People, princes and priests have all gone astray. The burden of the utterance is that doom is coming, evil has so permeated the nation that destruction cannot be averted. In ch. 6 and 7 the tender heart of the prophet is seen as he cries out "Come let us return unto the Lord." Ch. 6: 1. But he sees the uselessness of his exhortation for Israel will not listen. In ch. 8 Hosea takes a different tone, he cries an alarm, "Set the trumpet to thy mouth" cry aloud, fear the anger of the Lord, "They have sown the wind, they shall reap the whirlwind"; but alas "Israel hath forgotten his Maker." The fire will come upon his cities "and it shall devour the palaces thereof." Ch. 8: 14.

(b) Ch. 9-11. Punishment coming.

The approaching disaster is described more minutely; destruc

tion of the national life, the desolation of the land, the exile of the people. All those things in which Israel trusts for help in her time of need will prove unavailing. In ch. 11 we have the lament of God, by the mouth of the prophet, over Israel His child who must now go into captivity.

(c) Ch. 12-14. Repentance and restoration.

The prophet shows in how many ways God had striven to bring Israel to repentance and had sought in vain to bring the nation out of its love of sin. Ch. 12-13.

In ch. 14 Hosea makes an earnest and impassioned plea to Israel to return unto the Lord and be forgiven. He declares that God will receive and bless the nation and the threatened punishment will be averted.

Note. We see in ch. 1: 10 and 11 a distinct Messianic prediction.

XXIII.

JOEL.

PLACE AND CONTENTS.

It is somewhat difficult to fix the time of Joel's prophecy. From a careful survey of the book itself and the state of affairs in Judah to which it refers, many scholars unite in placing the date at about 860 B. C. Joash, under the influence of the priest Jehoida, was then reigning over Judah. A great plague of locusts with a severe drought had desolated the land. The prophet calls upon the people to repent of their sins and pray to God to spare the nation and the land. God hears and answers His chosen people; the country is blessed with abundant harvests. This incident is made the basis for a vision of the future and the coming of a day of Jehovah when God will pour out His spirit upon men and will "shew wonders in heaven and earth." All who call upon the Lord shall be saved. But the unbelieving nations shall be called to a great battle and will perish before the might of God. An idyllic picture of the restored Jerusalem under the Messianic kingdom is drawn in the last chapter. 3: 16-19.

THE PROPHET HIMSELF.

Joel was the son of Pethuel. His birthplace and

condition in life are unknown. That he prophesied and published his book in Jerusalem seems certain. Ch. 2: 15-17. Some have thought from the way in which he speaks of the temple and its services that he was a priest. "He was a great word painter and prophetic orator."

VALUE AND TEACHING.

The value of Joel's prophesy lies in the absolute certainty with which he predicted the glorious outcome of all the conflicts between good and evil. Israel was to come in contact with the great world empires; the nation was to be the vassal first of one, then of another; her kings were to prove false and her priests untrue. It would seem to some fainting spirits that the chosen people must be blotted out and evil must triumph. But let such despondent ones take courage; Joel had seen the map of the future; the day of Jehovah was coming when the enemies of God should perish and the righteous be saved. There is a glorious future for all who love and serve the Lord.

In teaching "Joel moves in a circle of moral convictions and eschatological hopes. His book is one of a series of apocalypses which culminate in Revelation." He dwells upon the hopes and fears of men: "the certain reward of the righteous and the certain punishment of the wicked."

His most distinctive prophecy is that of the outpouring of the Spirit. (Ch. 2: 28-32) which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2: 16-21.

ANALYSIS.

This prophecy is divided into two parts: "A call to repentance and a promise of blessing."

I. A CALL TO REPENTANCE. Ch. 1-2: 17.

The immediate occasion of the prophecy is a visitation of locusts accompanied by a severe drought. The prophet calls for a time of fasting, prayer and penitence for he sees in this plague a symbol of an approaching "*Day of Jehovah*," for Israel.

II. A PROMISE OF BLESSING. Ch. 2: 18-Ch. 3.

The assembly of the people is supposed to have been held and Jehovah entreated to forgive and bless the nation. The answer comes in the promise of God to deliver Israel from the famine and the plague, and to give abundant harvests; the people shall eat in plenty and be satisfied. But the "*Day of Jehovah*" will come and God will pour out His spirit upon His people. The "*Day of Jehovah*" will be a terrible day with "wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke." For all who call upon the Lord this shall be a day of deliverance. They shall be saved from the calamities as they have now been kept in the devastation wrought by the plague of locusts. But for the heathen "The Day of Jehovah" will be a day of Judgment from which they cannot escape. At last Jerusalem shall be exalted and the power of God made known in the greatness and glory of the Messianic Kingdom.

XXIV.

AMOS.

CONTENTS.

This work stands third in the list of Minor Prophets but in point of time (about 760-746 B. C.), precedes that of Hosea. The book is a perfect whole and has a well defined plan. The message is one of doom upon the surrounding nations (Ch. 1-2) and upon Israel (Ch. 3-9). The case of the chosen nation is that of incurable depravity. "The downfall of the throne, the exile of the people, and the dissolution of the state are proclaimed." Yet at the close (Ch. 9: 11-15), the greatness of the Messianic Kingdom is pictured in glowing sentences.

THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET.

He belonged to Tekoa, a small town of Judea about 12 miles south of Jerusalem. By occupation he was a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. As he followed the flock, God called him to prophesy to the northern kingdom. He obeyed the call and went to Bethel in Israel where the sanctuary was. There he prophesied with such fervor and plainness of speech that Amaziah the priest (Ch. 7: 10) complained to the king and he was expelled from the kingdom.

It is probable that he returned to Tekoa where he wrote out his prophecy.

THE MESSAGE OF AMOS.

This prophecy was delivered during the reign of Jeroboam II. and just after his great successes. (See the history of the times in the lesson on the book of Hosea). But prosperity brought grave evils in its train. The rich lived in great luxury: their houses were built of hewn stone and panelled with ivory (Ch. 3: 15; 5: 11) "where they drank and feasted to excess amid delicate perfumes and soft strains of varied music" (Ch. 6: 4-6). But all this was obtained through violence and robbery. (Ch. 3: 10). The poor and needy were sold as slaves and false weights and measures used. (Ch. 2: 6-8; 8: 4-6). The judges were notoriously corrupt. (Ch. 5: 7-12.) To be upright was to be hated and unpopular. (Ch. 5: 10.) Such in brief was the state of society in Israel when Amos went on his mission. He taught the truths that justice between man and man is one of the divine foundations of society; that privilege implies responsibility and that failure to recognize responsibility will surely bring punishment; that nations, and by analogy, individuals are bound to live up to the measure of light and knowledge which has been granted them; that the most elaborate worship is but an insult to God when offered by those who have no mind to conform in will and conduct to His requirements.

The great ideas in the theology of Amos are: the sovereignty of God in nature and history (Ch. 5: 8; 9: 6) and that He requires truth and righteousness in men and nations.

ANALYSIS.

There are three natural divisions in the Book of Amos.

I. Ch. 1-2. THE CONDEMNATION OF HEATHEN NATIONS.

The prophet takes a survey of the nations bordering on Israel: Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Judah. He shows by particular instances how they have sinned in breaking the common laws of humanity and morality. Their punishment is sure. In like manner Israel for similar and greater sins shall not escape. *Amos in these chapters finely sets forth the Sovereignty of God over all nations and the truth that heathen countries are responsible to Him for wrong doing.*

II. Ch. 3-6. THE ARRAIGNMENT AND DOOM OF ISRAEL.

This section consists of three discourses beginning with the words "Hear this word." The doom is pronounced.

(a) For civil iniquities. Ch. 3.

(b) For oppression of the poor and idolatry. Ch. 4.

(c) Chapters 5 and 6 are a lamentation for the doom of Israel which is now imminent. The day of the Lord shall be to this nation (Ch. 5: 19) "as if a man did flee from a lion and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall and a serpent bit him." And yet if Israel will only seek the Lord all shall be well. (Ch. 5: 4.)

The prophet clearly shows the reasons, set down in order, why judgment was pronounced on the chosen nation. God is shown as merciful and kind as well as just.

III. Ch. 7-9. FIVE VISIONS AND A HISTORY.

Amos now gives the visions which came to him showing the sure destruction of Israel for her sins.

The First Vision. (Ch. 7: 1-3) God sends grasshoppers to devour the vegetation but Amos intercedes and He stops the plague.

The Second Vision. (Ch. 7: 4-6) God sends fire but this ceases at the intercession of the prophet.

The Third Vision. (Ch. 7: 7-9) The Lord by the plumbline shows that the time for mercy is past. Amos now speaks plain-

ly foretelling the desolation of Israel and that the house of Jeroboam should come to an end with the sword.

Historical Episode. (Ch. 7: 10-17.) The priest, Amaziah, for the prophecy of Amos against Israel and Jeroboam, commands him to depart out of Israel.

The Fourth Vision. (Ch. 8.) By the basket of summer fruit Jehovah shows the prophet that the limit of His mercy is reached and that desolation of land and people will come shortly.

The Fifth Vision. (Ch. 9: 1-10.) The Lord come to judgment.

Conclusion. The Restoration and the Messianic Kingdom. (Ch. 9: 11-15). A beautiful picture of the coming of Christ's Kingdom and the reign of plenty.

Note: Amos predicted the Assyrian captivity, the destruction of the house of Jeroboam, the return of the remnant and the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom.

XXV.

OBADIAH.

PLACE AND CONTENTS OF THE BOOK.

The immediate occasion of this prophecy was the brutality of Edom in rejoicing over the capture and ruin of Jerusalem. Many scholars think that the destruction of the Holy City spoken of in this book is that accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B. C. Of the prophet we know nothing; he has hidden himself behind his prophecy.

ANALYSIS.

The one chapter of the book naturally falls into four divisions:

I. EDMON'S PUNISHMENT. Vs. 1-9.

The nations are called upon to go to battle against Edom. "She thinks herself secure in the clefts of the rock, in her city of Petra, built along the high cliffs of the Sik; but though she exalts herself as the eagle and sets her nest among the stars, Jehovah shall bring her down and make her small among the heathen."

II. EDMON'S GUILT. Vs. 10-14.

Edom has trampled basely on the fallen; betrayed the fugitives; stood in the passes to intercept those who would escape and indulged in barbarous revels upon the Holy Temple Hill. She has had no mercy upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem in their hour of greatest distress.

III. GUILT OF HEATHEN NATIONS. Vs. 15-16.

This punishment shall not come upon Edom alone but the

"Lord is near upon *all* the heathen"; the reward of their evil doings shall come upon them. There shall be no restoration for them. "They shall be as if they had not been."

IV. PROMISE OF RESTORATION FOR ISRAEL. Vs. 17-21.

"But for Israel there shall be deliverance and holiness." In the glad time approaching the "house of Jacob" shall prevail and the borders of the land be greatly extended. In verse twenty-one there is a glimpse of a yet wider horizon when "the Kingdom shall be the Lord's."

THIS PROPHECY WAS FULFILLED in part by the survival of Israel and extinction of Edom. This latter nation was conquered by the Nabatheans, who founded the Kingdom of Arabia Petrea, before the end of the fourth century B. C. "The closing words of this prophecy are still the end upon which the eye of hope is fixed, and the kingdom for which we look and pray is not limited, material, temporal, but universal, spiritual eternal."

THE ESCHATOLOGY of Obadiah is about the same as the other prophets: "The deliverance of the captivity of Judah, the sanctity of Mt. Zion, the judgment of the heathen" and the establishment of the Kingdom of the Lord.

XXVI. JONAH.

PLAN.

The Book of Jonah is a narrative, and "the history of a prophecy" rather than a prophecy itself. In both contents and form it is like the narratives of Elijah and Elisha. (1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 4-6). One of the best of modern critics declares that "no doubt the outlines of the narrative are historical" (Driver. Introduction to the Old Testament). The book is written in the third person. It is very evident that the idea of the author was to teach exclusively, great moral and spiritual lessons, although the story is full of the miraculous element.

THE PROPHET.

Jonah was the son of Amittai, and of the town of Gath-hefer, a village on the eastern frontier of Zebulun, a little over an hour's journey north of Nazareth. He is referred to in 2 Kings 14:25. He predicted to Jeroboam II the success he would have in his war with the Syrians, whereby the territory of Israel was restored to its ancient limits. He prophesied about the year 800 B. C.

LESSONS OF THE NARRATIVE.

God's Care and Love for Heathen Nations. In this

book Jonah's mission is to the greatest heathen city of his time; the prophet is a Jew, but he has here no message for his race. God's love for the sinful city, and the divine forgiveness on its repentance are magnificently set forth:

The claim of the Jew that God cared for the chosen nation alone is shown to be without foundation. Jonah, the Jew, attempts to flee from his mission to another nation and is brought back. His exclusiveness and narrow-mindedness are rebuked.

The Nature of True Repentance and God's Forgiveness. It is shown that only true fear and repentance can bring salvation from Jehovah, as in the case of the sailors, Jonah, and the Ninevites.

The Function of the True Prophet. "To deliver God's message whatever it is; to be absolutely fearless even in peril of death; not to trouble one's self about the fulfillment of prophecies, but to leave them absolutely in the hands of God."

There are here found also large lessons of toleration, pity, and love; the impossibility of fleeing from God; the contrast between man's littleness and hatred, and God's large charity and mercy.

Difficulties. Many miss these great lessons in poring over the story of the whale. There is nothing extraordinary in the salvation of Jonah if we believe in the miraculous. There is no element out of the ordinary in the city repenting at the preaching of Jonah. There are a number of instances on record of great impressions produced on urban populations by preachers and prophets.

ANALYSIS.

THE BOOK MAY BE DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS.

I. THE CALL OF JONAH. Ch. 1-2.

In this section of the narrative there are four incidents or scenes:

1. The Prophet's mission to the great city of Nineveh.
2. His flight in the opposite direction to Tarshish (Spain).
3. The storm by which God arrested him, and during which he is cast into the sea to be swallowed by a great fish.
4. The prayer in which Jonah, voicing his sense of danger and distress, beseeches God for deliverance and salvation.

II. THE PREACHING OF JONAH. Ch. 3.

1. Jonah being called a second time proclaims his message in the streets of the heathen city of Nineveh: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

2. The people of Nineveh, startled by the tidings, repent of their sins, putting on sackcloth and sitting in ashes. They cry mightily to God for forgiveness.

3. God's gracious answer to the prayer of the city; the threatened destruction is averted.

III. THE ANGER OF JONAH AND THE MERCY OF GOD. Ch. 4.

Jonah is greatly displeased, and shows his littleness when he finds that the city is not to be destroyed. In his wrath to which he gives way he charges God with being "gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." God, by the lesson of the gourd, shows Jonah himself. The prophet humbled and penitent, makes no reply. In this chapter we have a reason for unfulfilled prophecy, and we learn the lesson that promises and threats are conditional. Nothing in the prophets shows more fully the great, loving heart of God.

XXVII.

MICAH.

THE AIM OF THE BOOK.

Micah's mission was to proclaim to Israel and Judah that judgment was at hand. He graphically depicts Jehovah coming forth out of His place amid awful convulsions of nature (Ch. 1:3-4). The sins of the house of Israel and the transgressions of Jacob have called Him forth. The prophet sees as in a vision village after village destroyed. Samaria goes down, and the desolation comes to the very gates of Jerusalem. Yet the book is very full in its references to the Messianic kingdom (Ch. 2:12-13; Ch. 4-5; Ch. 7:14-20.) The prediction of the birthplace of Christ is very plain (Ch. 5:2).

THE PROPHET.

Micah was a native of Moresheth, a small town on the Maritime Plain, about twenty miles south-west of Jerusalem. He lived in the times of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (probably also Manasseh), kings of Judah. He was a prophet to Israel and also to Judah. He was a younger contemporary of Isaiah. (See introduction to the book of Isaiah for the history of the times). Micah was a man who saw and felt keenly the social wrongs of his age (Ch. 2-3),

and sympathized deeply with the common people. He prophesied about 735-725 B. C.

THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

Under Uzziah and Jeroboam II, Judah and Israel had been outwardly prosperous, and the borders of the kingdoms advanced. The decline began upon their death. After King Uzziah of Judah, came Jotham who maintained his father's policy; Ahaz, who was weak morally, politically, and an idolater; Hezekiah, a good king, introduced great religious and political reforms. After Jeroboam II, king of Israel, came his son who was murdered; then followed a period of anarchy and a succession of bad kings, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea.

Samaria was captured in the reign of Hoshea, 721 B. C., by an Assyrian army, and the kingdom of Israel came to an end. Micah warned both Israel and Judah of this approaching invasion of Assyria, telling them if they would be saved they must put away their sins and turn to Jehovah. Hezekiah and Judah heeded him and were saved. (See Jeremiah 26: 17-19). Israel refused to hear the prophet and was destroyed. "The certainty of vengeance for iniquity was among the most axiomatic forms of prophetic teaching." Great social evils abounded in the age of Micah, and he was unsparing in his denunciation of them (Ch. 2-3).

CHIEF PROPHECIES OF MICAH.

1. *Destruction of Israel.* Ch. 1:6-7.

2. *Desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple.* Ch. 3:12; 7:13.

3. *Carrying the Jews to Babylon.* Ch. 4:10.

4. *Return from Exile.* Peace and prosperity. Spiritual primacy of Israel. Ch. 4:1-8; 7:11-17.

5. *A Ruler in Zion.* Ch. 4:8. Born at Bethlehem, of the family of David. Ch. 5:1-2.

Micah is remarkable for the clear vision which he had of things which were to come to pass.

ANALYSIS.

The book is naturally divided into three sections, and each section into three parts. The sections are Ch. 1-2; 3-5; 6-7. The parts are introduced with the invocation, "Hear ye," starting with a declaration of judgment, passing into reasons for the judgment in the guilt of sin, and closing with a promise of blessing.

I. Ch. 1-2. JUDGMENT FOR NATIONAL SINS.

(a) The whole world is summoned to witness the judgment Jehovah is about to inflict. Samaria is to be utterly destroyed; town after town will go down. The destroyer (the Assyrian) is to come to the very gates of Jerusalem.

(b) Ch. 2:1-11. The sins which have called down the wrath of heaven.

(c) Ch. 2:12-13. The promise of restoration of the "Remnant" from destruction.

II. Ch. 3-5. JUDGMENT FOR SOCIAL SINS.

(a) The judgment upon the governors and princes.

(b) The sins of the rich and powerful who cruelly oppress the poor. The judges who accept bribes, and the priests who teach for hire. Ch. 3.

(c) The Restoration. Ch. 4-5. A magnificent Messianic prophecy. The birth of Christ and the glory of His reign. Ch. 5:12.

III. Ch. 6-7. JUDGMENT FOR COVENANT BREAKING.

(a) The menace of God against the chosen nation. Ch. 6.

(b) God recounts through the mouth of the prophet what He has done for Israel: how He has kept the covenant with them, and how they have flouted Him. Ch. 7: 1-13.

(c) But God will have mercy and restore His people to favor. He will turn again and subdue their iniquities and cast their sins into the depths of the sea. Ch. 7:14-20.

XXVIII.

NAHUM.

THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK.

This book has but a single theme, the destruction of Nineveh. The Assyrian empire stood in the eyes of the Jews as the most brutal type of heathen abominations. The monuments have confirmed their opinion. The kings of Assyria boasted of their cruelty. Assurnazipal (B. C. 884) tells us how he "died the mountains of Nairi with blood like wool; how he flayed captive kings alive—and walled up others while still living, and impaled them on stakes; how he burnt boys and girls in the fire, put out eyes, cut off hands, feet, noses and ears." Asshur-bani-pal who captured Thebes in Egypt (Ch. 3:8-9) tells us how "he tore off the lips and hands of kings and compelled a prince to wear round his neck the decapitated head of his king and all this they profess to do at the command of Asshur, their god." One writer says, "no power more useless, more savage, more terrible ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history." This power is mentioned as early as the 16th century B. C. In the very height of its glory and just after it had humbled Egypt, its great rival. Nahum, the prophet predicts its utter ruin.

He proclaims the truth that kingdoms built on fraud, force and cruelty must fall before God's kingdom reared on the foundation of truth and righteousness. The book forcibly brings before us God's moral government of the world.

THE PROPHET AND TIME OF THE PROPHECY.

Nahum is called in this book the Elkoshite; he is one of a great group of prophets of the last half of the 7th century B. C.; the other members of this band are: Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel; each of these men had a distinct message and delivered it in his own way. *The date* of Nahum's prophecy falls between the destruction of Thebes (Ch. 3:8) 664 B. C. and the capture of Nineveh by the Babylonians and Medes, 607 B. C. Probably the time is 640 B. C. in the reign of Josiah king of Judah.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE DOOM OF NINEVEH PRONOUNCED. Ch. 1.

Jehovah appears in judgment upon His adversaries. The character of Jehovah is depicted as "Slow to anger and great in power." He will not acquit the wicked. He is good to those who trust in Him. Nineveh is destined to destruction because it is vile.

II. THE ASSAULT UPON NINEVEH. Ch. 2.

Nineveh (a city of 1200 towers; walls a hundred feet high and broad enough on top for three chariots to drive abreast) great as she is cannot escape. Her foes will find means to enter, "chariots shall rage in the streets." "The gates of the rivers shall be opened and the palace dissolved."

III. THE UTTER RUIN OF NINEVEH. Ch. 3.

The woe is upon the city because she is full of lies and robbery. She cannot escape her destruction any more than Thebes.

Jehovah is against the wicked city. "The gates of the land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars." "Thy people are scattered upon the mountains and no man gathereth them "; no restoration shall come to this city.

Note. This prophecy was fulfilled in 607 B. C. and there has been no new Assyrian empire since that time. The Chaldean empire is the next world power, with Babylon as its capital.

XXIX.

HABAKKUK.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK.

When Habakkuk prophesied about 608 B. C., the political and moral situation was a critical one. Nahum predicted the downfall of Assyria which took place in 607 B. C. Two great world powers, Egypt and Babylon contended for the vacant place of master of the earth; the issue was decided in favor of the Chaldeans at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B. C. Judah, after the death of the good king, Josiah at the battle of Megiddo had thrown off all restraint and sinned openly and flagrantly. It was a time to try men's souls. To Habakkuk it was given to see the future; he realized that Jerusalem must fall before the rising Chaldean power. But he was greatly troubled over the fact that one evil nation should put down another. There seemed to him to be no advance in righteousness, only evil triumphing over evil.

PURPOSE.

To answer the question why wickedness seems to triumph and to vindicate God's righteousness the prophecy is thrown into the form of a dramatic dialogue between Habakkuk and Jehovah. "God is

boldly and reverently challenged to defend His action in the government of the world." It is the problem of Job, of the Psalms, and of Ecclesiastes with this difference, there it is individual, here it is national. The prophecy needs careful study to see the beauty of the answers. There are two vindications of God's righteousness. The Chaldeans having evil in themselves will perish; evil is the seed of death; only the just shall live. God shows the prophet what He has been in the past to the chosen nation and that He is supreme over man and nature. What He has been in the past to all nations that He will be in the future. Right will prevail.

ANALYSIS.

I. Ch. 1. THE PROBLEM OF THE SEEMING TRIUMPH OF WRONG.

(a) Vs. 1-4. The question of the prophet: why evil is unchecked.

GOD'S FIRST ANSWER.

(b) Vs. 5-11. Jehovah answers by pointing to the Chaldeans, whom He has brought forth to chastise the wicked nation.

(c) Vs. 12-17. Habakkuk asks if the Chaldeans are not evil and if they are to go on forever.

II. Ch. 2. GOD'S SECOND ANSWER.

God says "The just shall live by his faith" (v. 4) but the wicked man has in himself the cause of his own ruin. The Chaldeans are described, their rapacity, selfishness, vain ambition, drunkenness and idolatry; these sins are to be their ruin. The great world power of Babylon is sure to fall. The prophet acknowledges the might and justice of God. "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him"

III. Ch. 3. GOD'S THIRD ANSWER.

Habakkuk is afraid that the doom of the Chaldeans will be too long delayed. Ch 3. 1-2. This calls out the ~~third~~ reply of

God in which He reminds the prophet of what He has done in the past and the marvellous deliverances which He has given His people in days of old. The supremacy of God is shown in history and in nature. We can see only a small part of the great plan. Righteousness must prevail. The prophet reflecting on these divine truths declares that he will trust God and rejoice in Him even in the midst of the greatest distress.

XXX.

ZEPHANIAH.

PERIOD OF THIS BOOK.

Zephaniah, son of Cushi, prophesied in the days of Josiah, King of Judah, 640-608 B. C. Two corrupt and idolatrous kings, Manasseh and Amon, preceded Josiah on the throne. Jerusalem became a hot-bed of evil. The abuses in church and state seem to have continued during the early years of the reign of Josiah. The book of Zephaniah reflects as in a mirror the character of the times. The prophet was a preacher of righteousness and denounced the evils of his age in unsparing terms. By this preaching it is believed that both people and king were moved to better things; so that when "the book of the law of the Lord was found in the temple" (2 Kings 22:8) matters were ready for the great reformation which followed. This return to law, order, righteousness and spirituality stayed for a while the threatened judgment. Many scholars place this prophecy in 630 B. C. In the world at large at this time or a little later, the Scythians, the barbarous hordes from the north, pillaged and burned many cities and towns of Assyria and Syria. They penetrated to the confines of Egypt but were bribed by great presents of the king not to

invade his country. Many think that the prophet foreseeing the havoc to be wrought by the Scythians refers to them and looking beyond them sees a judgment which cannot be averted. Egypt will not be able to buy her freedom from her enemies as she did from the Scythians, (Ch. 1:18) Nineveh shall fall and be a desolation (Ch. 2:13).

TEACHING.

1. Not alone Israel but all nations will be called to account for their sins. Ch. 2.

2. The Judgment is conceived to be not only a punishment for sin but a purging and a remedial process. Ch. 2: 11 and 3: 12.

3. A new idea is brought in, a new note struck in the proclamation of the conversion of the heathen nations and that instead of all nations streaming to Zion, men shall worship God anywhere. Compare ch. 2: 11 with John 4: 21.

4. Fulfilled prophecy: Egypt, Assyria and the nations mentioned have all been destroyed but the Jewish Church passing into the Christian Church still abides.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE JUDGMENT FOR SIN ANNOUNCED. Ch. 1.

A day of destruction is foretold for all nations, "but directed in particular against idolaters and apostates in Judah and Jerusalem." The darkness and terrible nature of the day are depicted.

II. REPENTANCE URGED AS A MEANS OF SALVATION. Ch. 2-3: 7.

The prophet lays upon his people the necessity of turning to God if they care to be saved from the threatened desolation.

Ch. 2:1-4. He then describes the doom which will engulf the nations in succession: Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia and Nineveh. **Ch. 2-3: 7.**

III. PROMISE OF BLESSING TO THE FAITHFUL REMNANT. Ch. 3: 8-20.

Zephaniah speaks in glowing language of the safety and glory of the "purged and purified remnant of Israel." "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout O Israel, be glad and rejoice with all thy heart O daughter of Jerusalem." **Ch. 3:14.**

XXXI.

HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

OCCASION OF THE PROPHECIES.

The return from exile had been foretold by a number of prophets. The fall of Nineveh and Babylon had also been predicted. All these prophecies were fulfilled. When Haggai and Zechariah appeared the returned band of over 42,000 exiles had been living in Jerusalem for sixteen years. The return had been made possible by the decree of Cyrus of Persia in 536 B. C.; it had been led by Zerubbabel, a direct descendant of King David. In the first year of the return the altar of burnt offering had been set up; two years after, work had been begun on the temple foundations but was soon arrested on account of the bitter opposition which came from the surrounding peoples. For fourteen years the labor was at a standstill. The Jews were rapidly reconciling themselves to the situation when Haggai and Zechariah in 520 B. C. arose with burning words, calling upon the people to arise and rebuild the sanctuary. The result was that in four years the temple was finished and dedicated (see Ezra ch. 3-6) in 516 B. C. See Jeremiah 29: 10-11.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MESSAGE.

The prophets came at a grave crisis in the history

of the chosen people. Their first enthusiasm being upon the ground where Jerusalem had been, was worn away by the difficulties and dangers with which they were surrounded. The glory of the restored capital and temple pictured by the prophets before the exile seemed a mirage, never to be realized. The returned exiles who were few in numbers and poor in resources, began to rebuild the ruins of the city and reclaim a long neglected soil. A reaction was inevitable. To restore to this people hope, courage and a holy zeal for God's cause was the task of Haggai and Zechariah. How well they did it according to the word which God gave them is shown by the rising of the temple from its ruins.

THE PROPHETS.

(See Ezra 4: 24 and 5: 1-2).

Haggai and Zechariah were, in all probability among the exiles who returned with Zerubbabel from Babylon. Haggai began to prophesy in the 2d year of Darius on the first day of the 6th month and concluded his prophecy on the 24th day of the 9th month. Zechariah began his prophecy in the 8th month of the same year and continued to prophesy for some years after that. The latter part of the book of Zechariah (Ch 9-14) has a much wider sweep than the first part and is very rich in its predictions of the Messianic King and Kingdom.

ANALYSIS. HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

HAGGAI.

I. AN APPEAL TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE. Ch. 1.

The prophet announces that the time has come to resume work upon the Lord's House and that the means ought to be forthcoming. Neglect to do this has brought evil upon the land. Twenty-four days later the people began work upon the temple.

II. THE NEW TEMPLE WILL BE MORE GLORIOUS THAN THE OLD ONE. Ch. 2: 1-9.

The prophet looks forward to the advent of the Messiah.

III. A BLESSING WILL COME WITH THE NEW TEMPLE. Ch. 2: 10-19.

True prosperity can be expected only when God's House is rightly cared for and its services maintained.

IV. A SPECIAL PROMISE TO PRINCE ZERUBBABEL. Ch. 2: 20-23.

This promise is regarded as symbolical and looking forward to Christ as a descendant of Zerubbabel and of King David.

ZECHARIAH.

THIS PROPHECY HAS TWO GRAND DIVISIONS. The first of (Ch. 1-8) which relates to the rebuilding of the temple and the second (Ch. 9-14) which is entirely different in character and conception, refers to the Messianic King and Kingdom.

I. THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE. Ch. 1-8.

These prophecies are for Israel's encouragement.

(a) An exhortation to repent and return to God. Ch. 1: 1-6.

(b) "A prophecy consisting of eight symbolical visions with an appendix." The visions are given with explanations for the encouragement of the Jews in rebuilding the temple. Ch. 1: 7-6: 15.

1. First vision. The horseman among the myrtle trees. Ch. 1: 7-17. The messengers of the Lord are continually on the watch. There is no movement among the nations. It is time to rebuild the Temple.

2. Second vision. The four horns and four smiths. Ch. 1: 18-21. The nations opposed to Israel shall have their power broken. God cares for His chosen people. No harm shall come to them even if the nations do rise in opposition. God will protect the workmen in rebuilding the Temple.

3. Third vision. The measuring line. Ch. 2. Here the prophet encourages the expectation of a large increase in the size and population of Jerusalem.

4. Fourth vision. Joshua, the High Priest and Satan. Ch. 3. Joshua is given rule over the Temple; the Messiah is promised (vs. 8) and the return of national happiness.

5. Fifth vision. The golden candlestick. Ch. 4. With the Temple rebuilt, God will dwell with His people (vs. 6). He will supply divine grace through His "two anointed ones"; thought to signify the temporal and spiritual powers: Zerubbabel and Joshua.

6 & 7. Sixth and seventh visions. The flying roll and the woman in the ephah. Ch. 5. These visions signify the rebuilding of the Temple and God's return to His house and that the land will be cleansed of evil doers. Again, the curse for crime will light on the individual and Israel's guilt will be carried away.

8. Eighth vision. Four war chariots. Ch. 6: 1-8.

This vision conveys the assurance that God would now take care that the peace of Israel should not be disturbed by the great powers of the world.

Appendix. Ch. 6: 9-15. The crowning of Joshua and the coming of the Messiah. A deputation had come from Babylon bearing gifts to the Temple. Zechariah is instructed to take of their silver and gold and make a crown for the high priest Joshua. This symbolical act signified the exaltation of the spiritual kingdom. Zerubbabel representing the temporal kingdom is left uncrowned. In this connection comes the promise of "The Branch" Christ who is to be the spiritual king of the world and be the glory of the Temple.

(c) The requirements of the Law. Ch. 7-8.

1. In answer to a question regarding fast days, Zechariah shows the requirements of God's Law. "Obedience is better than fasting. Ch. 7: 4-7. Disobedience is at the root of all their past misery. Ch. 7: 8-14."

2. The glory of the Messianic kingdom. Ch. 8. God will make the nation glad in proportion to their past affliction in the splendid age that is coming. In vs. 23. It has literally come to pass that men of all countries are taking hold of "the skirt of him that is a Jew" for they see that the greatest revelation of God has come through a Jew.

II. THE MESSIANIC KING AND KINGDOM. Ch. 9-14. In this division we pass into a fresh region of thought. The didactic element gives way to the apocalyptic and it is not always easy to find the way. In the first division of the book we see clearly everything which the author is aiming at but in this second part the subjects treated are so large that it is difficult to comprehend them. There are however certain distinct ideas; (and following Prof. Kirkpatrick of Cambridge) we shall divide this section by them.

(a) The Messianic king. Ch. 9-10. After a judgment upon the heathen and the storm of war, Israel's king shall come to her.

1. A prince of peace. A king who is just and will save the lowly. "He comes riding upon an ass." Vs. 9.

2. His policy will be peace to the heathen. Vs. 10.

3. "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea." Vs. 10. In verses 9 and 10 we see the union of the two prophetic lines of thought about the Messiah; the suffering servant and the triumphant king.

In the remainder of chapter 9 and in chapter 10 God is represented as rescuing Judah from her foes and she is exhorted to flee from idolatry and trust in Jehovah.

(b) The rejected Shepherd. Ch. 11. After a storm of war the prophet is bidden to assume the character of a shepherd (in an allegory) to save Israel but he is rejected and sold for the

price of a slave, thirty pieces of silver, (vs. 12) signifying the rejection and betrayal of Christ, and the sum of money for which Judas betrayed Him.

(c) The restored and penitent people. Ch. 12-13: 9. This is a separate prophecy.

In ch. 12-13 :9. The nations besiege Jerusalem but she is delivered. Ch. 12: 1-9. The mourning of the nation. Ch. 12: 10-14. A fountain opened in the house of David for the cleansing of the nation. Ch. 13: 1-6. (The fountain of the Messiah). "This is one of the prophecies which seem to point to a national repentance on the part of the Jews. In ch. 13: 7-9 we seem to have a new apostacy from Christ set forth and another restoration.

(d) The divine sovereignty. Ch. 14. A vision of a great day of Jehovah. The nations are gathered against Jerusalem by God. Then He goes forth to battle. The Mt. of Olives is cleft asunder. A day of light comes. Jerusalem is exalted. Vs. 1-11. The nations that fought against Jerusalem shall be destroyed. Vs. 12-15. God at that time shall be acknowledged by all nations and all things will be holy and consecrated to Him. Vs. 16-21.

XXXII.

MALACHI.

TIME AND OCCASION OF THE PROPHECY.

Malachi prophesied after the restoration and at the time when Judah was a Persian province. The walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt and the temple restored with its regular services. The evils spoken of in this book are the same which gradually grew up in Jerusalem and are mentioned in Ezra ch. 9 and 10 and Nehemiah 13.

The occasion which called forth the prophecy was the discontent which arose from the disappointment of the people's expectation at once to realize a glorious Messianic kingdom. Bad harvests had increased the disappointment. The first enthusiasm had worn away and faith had begun to sink into scepticism. The people neglected Jehovah's service and the priests allowed the neglect. Grave social evils made their appearance. God's moral government was questioned and the issue was raised; does it pay to serve God?

Malachi seeks to recall the people to their allegiance to God and revive the national spirit. He insists upon the importance of maintaining the public worship of God in all its purity. He is unsparing in

his denunciation of social evils. He shows that God is the moral governor of the world and that it will pay to serve Him. He predicts that God's messenger will suddenly come to His temple and that the old prophecies will be fulfilled. But before the Messiah comes, a great prophet, His forerunner, will appear ushering in the Messianic age.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. Ch. 1: 2-5. GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE is shown by the contrast between the lot of Israel and that of Edom.

II. Ch. 1: 6-2: 16. ISRAEL'S LACK OF LOVE FOR GOD.

There had evidently been some questioning, why the glorious things spoken of by the prophets had not been realized. The prophet shows in this section that the fault is not with God but with Israel.

(a) The people had neglected to offer to God right things and had not given Him the glory and honor due Him; the priests had failed in their duties for which they were threatened with a curse. Ch. 2: 1-9.

(b) Grave social evils had been allowed. Men of Israel had divorced their wives to marry heathen women. Ch. 2: 10-17.

III. Ch. 2: 17-3: 6. GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD. God's moral government is questioned. Ch. 2: 17.

Jehovah's messenger (The Messiah) will suddenly come to His temple and the time will be a day of judgment for evil doers. Ch. 3: 1-6.

IV. Ch. 3: 7-12. RESULT OF ISRAEL'S SIN.

Wrong doing, failure to honor God have brought a curse on the land. A blessing is promised if Israel will only return to God.

V. Ch. 3: 13-4: 6. RESULT OF SERVING GOD.

The people complain that it is useless to serve God, no distinction being made between the evil and the good. The

prophet shows that the time is coming when God will silence all these murmurers; the workers of evil will be punished and the good rewarded. The book ends with an exhortation to obey the law and the promise of the coming of Elijah.

XXXIII.

MATTHEW.

FROM MALACHI TO MATTHEW.

Great events took place in the political world in the interval between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. When Malachi prophesied, the Persian empire, having its capital in the far East, was at the height of its power. In 330 B. C. Alexander the Great subjugated the Persian empire and became master of the oriental world; after his death his kingdom was divided into four parts. The Jews, in this arrangement, were under the dominion of Egypt until 198 B. C. when Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, wrested Palestine from Egypt. This king attempted to destroy the religion of Jehovah : the Temple was desecrated and closed ; Jerusalem twice taken and sacked and a system of cruel persecutions instituted. The very harsh measures used to compel the Jews to give up their religion reacted and a priest named Mattathias led a successful revolution in 166 B. C. After him his five sons ruled in succession. The boundaries of the land were extended over Edom, Samaria and Galilee. This period to 40 B. C. is known as the time of the Maccabean independence. In the last year

mentioned the Romans completed their conquest, entered the city of Jerusalem and made Herod the Great, an Idumean and a descendant of Esau, king over Palestine. Jesus was born near the close of his reign.

PREPARATION OF THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

When Christ came, the Roman empire held sway from the Atlantic ocean to the Euphrates River, (a distance of more than three thousand miles) and from the friths of Scotland to the cataracts of the Nile. Caesar Augustus was emperor. The world was at peace.

Three events greatly helped to make ready the world for the spread of the Gospel.

1. The conquest of Alexander by means of which the Greek language was known everywhere.

2. The rise of the Roman Empire which secured social order and political unity everywhere. All lands were accessible.

3. The dispersion of the Jews, who had their synagogues everywhere. Wherever the Jew went he took his religion with him.

Outwardly it was a splendid age, one in which the arts and sciences were cultivated to the highest degree.

Religiously and morally the study of this period shows the lowest possible conception of evil. Responsibility to God and moral restraint were scoffed at. The picture given by Paul in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is true to life. Yet there was

a longing for something better. The spiritual desires of nations were unsatisfied. The Romans found no rest in power, the Greeks in thought, the Jews in rabbinism. The old ideals of life were wearing out. The ancient philosophies and religions were perishing. The world was ready for its spiritual king. (See Fisher's Beginnings of Christianity.)

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

This Gospel appears in the New Testament in four forms: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The first three are called the synoptic (seeing together) gospels; they, to a large extent, report the same incidents and discourses. They are mostly concerned with the ministry in Galilee.

The fourth form of the Gospel is chiefly about Christ's ministry in Judea. John specially represents Jesus as the divine Son of God.

1. *The message of Matthew* is to the Jews. He wrote in Judea about 60 A. D. His aim is to show that Jesus Christ is the predicted Messiah. Sixty-five passages are quoted from the Old Testament to prove that Jesus is the fulfillment of the law, the prophecy and the hope of Israel. The genealogy of Christ is traced to king David (a son or descendant of Abraham). Matthew makes us see that the Messianic kingdom has begun.

2. *The message of Mark* is to the Romans. He wrote in Italy about 62 A. D. No genealogy is given as none was needed in writing to the Romans. The dominant idea is divine power ministering to men and

at the same time attesting Christ's claim as the Son of God and Lord of the world. There is an energetic brevity and rapidity of movement; the word "Straightway" occurs forty-one times. We have a life-like picture of the earthly acts of Jesus.

3. *The message of Luke* is to the Greeks (or to both Jew and Gentile). He wrote probably in the city of Caesarea about 63 A. D. The genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam, the progenitor of the human race, to connect him with the whole race and not merely with the Israelitish nation. The world-wide character of Christianity is vividly portrayed. Christ is the Divine Savior of both Jew and Gentile.

4. *The message of John* is to all Christians. He wrote in Ephesus about 98 A. D. It is the gospel of eternity. The genealogy of Christ is traced to God. He is declared to have been in the beginning with God and to be God. It is a discourse from beginning to end about the Divinity of Christ. It supplements the other forms of the Gospel of Christ, settling all doubt about His Deity.

THE AIM OF MATTHEW.

The author, Matthew, was a Hebrew, the son of Alphaeus; before his conversion he was called Levi and was a tax gatherer. As an apostle of Christ he had a personal knowledge of the facts and events which he relates. He wrote his gospel in the Greek language, of which there was also a Hebrew version.

The purpose is very plain. The book was written to show that the promises given to the patriarchs and

the children of Israel, the law revealed to Moses, the predictions of the prophets and the history of the nation, find their fulfillment, significance and goal in Jesus Christ. The king for whom Israel had been trained to long had come. This book is placed next to the Old Testament because in it each strand of the former revelation finds its completion.

ANALYSIS.

The book of Matthew after the opening chapters (1-4: 16) falls naturally into two parts each preceded by the same words, "From that time." I. Ch. 4: 17-16: 20. "*From that time* Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." II. Ch. 16: 21-28: 20. "*From that time* forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." The first section marks the beginning of Christ's active ministry, the second his passion.

INTRODUCTION. THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM. Ch. 1-4: 16.

The wise men (Ch. 2:2) coming to the birth of Jesus, asked, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews." We have in this gospel this thought constantly before us that Jesus, the promised Messianic king of the Jews, has come.

(a) The birth of the king from the royal line of David. Ch. 1. Wise men from the East come and worship the kingly babe. The flight into Egypt. Ch. 2. See prophecies, Num. 24: 17, Is. 60: 3, Micah 5: 2, Hosea 11: 1, and Jer. 31: 15 (See margin of reference bible for all the prophecies referred to in this and other chapters).

(b) The herald of the king, John the Baptist. Ch. 3: 1-12. See Is. 4: 3, Malachi 4: 5; compare Matt. 3 with 11: 4-5.

(c) The testimonies of John and the Holy Spirit (Ch. 3: 13-17) to the mission and work of Christ, at the time of His baptism.

(d) **The Temptation.** Ch. 4: 1-16.

We have in the temptation clearly set forth, the objects and aims of the kingdom of heaven as opposed to the kingdoms of the world and of evil.

I. SIGNS AND WORKS OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM. Ch. 4: 17-16: 20.

Jesus begins His public ministry in Galilee. He shows the purpose for which He came and who He is.

(a) **The calling of the apostles.** Ch. 4: 17-25.

Jesus calls workers into the service of the kingdom and begins to train them.

(b) **The Sermon on the Mount.** Ch. 5-7.

"Jesus lays down the spiritual laws of the kingdom." "The Beatitudes are the decalogue" and the virtues of prayer, aims, holiness and humbleness of heart, the Leviticus of Christianity. "It is a kingdom of love shown by deeds of mercy." The proper preparation for it is amendment of life and a changed heart. Multitudes throng Jesus.

(c) **Ten miracles of power.** Ch. 8-9.

These wonders of grace are not all that Jesus did, but are selected as proofs that the Lord of Glory has come to earth and has supreme control over Disease (Ch. 8: 2), over Nature (Ch. 8: 26), and over Death (Ch. 9: 25). They also show His love and compassion for men.

(d) **The twelve apostles sent forth to preach.** Ch. 10.

"To the lost sheep of the house of Israel." A wider sphere of work is inaugurated. In this commission to the twelve Jesus would have the whole Jewish nation know of His coming and work.

(e) **Some effects of Christ's teaching and works.** Ch. 11-12.

John the Baptist (Ch. 11: 1-15) in prison could scarcely credit the great work of Jesus and the graciousness of His message; so he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to inquire about Him.

The cities of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum are taken to task for their unbelief after seeing many mighty works of the Messiah. Ch. 11: 16-30. In the twelfth chapter, Matthew shows

how many people failed to grasp the true spiritual teaching of the kingdom.

(f) A new method of teaching by parables. Ch. 13-14.

Jesus in a series of seven parables explains the nature and growth of His kingdom. In the fourteenth chapter we have the incident of the beheading of John the Baptist, and the story of two miracles, the feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the sea.

(g) The contrast between the law of the kingdom and Jewish legalism. Ch. 15-16: 12.

The difference between lip service and heart service of God is clearly shown by Christ in answer to questions by the Scribes and Pharisees. The opposition to Jesus now becomes plain.

(h) The great declaration. Ch. 16: 13-20.

This section of Christ's ministry ends with the great confession of Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."

II. THE PASSION OF THE KINGDOM. Ch. 16: 21 to the end.

The opposition to Christ has now grown strong; He is rejected by the Jews while confessed by the disciples. He now consciously enters upon the path of death.

(a) Christ makes four predictions of His suffering, death and resurrection: (1) At Cesarea Philippi. Ch. 16: 21. (2) At Capernaum. Ch. 17: 22. (3) Near Jerusalem. Ch. 20: 17. (4) At Jerusalem. Ch. 26: 1-2.

(b) The teaching about the kingdom in the presence of humiliation and death. Ch. 16: 21-18: 35.

(1) The glorified kingdom compared with the misery of earth; the transfiguration and the lunatic boy. Ch. 17. Greatness in the kingdom of heaven and the desire for exaltation on earth. The heavenly law of forgiveness. Ch. 18.

(2) The social life of the subjects of the Messianic king must be conformed to the law of the kingdom of heaven. Ch. 19-20. Divorce; children brought to Christ; the rich young ruler; the case of the laborers in the vineyard, etc.

(c) The triumph of the king. Ch. 21-25.

Christ enters Jerusalem as its king and cleanses the temple.

ple. The children praise him. Jesus, questioned in regard to His mission; wins successive victories over the Sanhedrin, 21:23-22:14, Pharisees, 22:15-22, Sadducees, 22:23-33, and a certain lawyer on the question of the greatest commandment, 22:34-40. Rebuke of the Pharisees. Ch. 23. Prediction of the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Ch. 24-25.

(d) The passion. Ch. 26-27.

The triumph of Jesus is over and He enters the shadow of the cross. He is now the predicted suffering Messiah. The stages of the passion are clearly marked: The last supper, the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trial, the crucifixion and death. "He humbled himself even unto the death upon the cross."

(e) The final triumph; the victory over death. Ch. 28.

"This gospel ends fittingly with the resurrection, with the declaration by the Lord Jesus of His universal power, and His commission to the disciples to teach all nations."

[Note: The student should look up the prophecies of the events of Christ's life as they are marked on the margins of reference bibles.]

XXXIV.

MARK.

THE AUTHOR.

Mark was the son of a certain Mary who lived in Jerusalem. She seems to have been a person of means and influence amongst the early Christians. Her house was a rallying point in those dangerous times (Acts 12: 12). Mark went with his cousin Barnabas (Col. 4: 10) and Paul on the first missionary journey but for some reason turned back at Perga (Acts 12: 25; 13: 13). Paul would not accept Mark on the second missionary journey and this caused a disagreement between him and Barnabas (Acts 15: 36-40). Paul and Mark were afterwards reconciled for we find him with Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome (Col. 4: 10; Philemon 24). Some time later he was with Peter in Babylon (1 Peter 5: 13). On his return to Asia Minor he seems to have been with Timothy at Ephesus, for Paul wrote to Timothy during his second imprisonment at Rome to come to him and bring Mark with him (2 Tim. 4: 11). Ancient writers with one consent make Mark the interpreter of the apostle Peter. His close association with the leaders of the church gave him exceptional opportunities to know the truth about Christ.

THE CENTRAL IDEA.

The chief object of this Gospel seems to be to present the wondrous and wonder-working life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in the most vivid and life-like way. The words are full of charm and color, the movement of events is energetic and active. Jesus calls men, and they straightway follow Him. He enters a synagogue and begins at once to teach. A demon recognizes His power and proclaims it. Men are amazed at the omnipotence of His command and His fame immediately spreads through Galilee.

TO WHOM WRITTEN.

It is very evident that Matthew wrote to the Jews; it is equally plain that Mark had in mind Gentile and Roman readers. He omits the genealogy of Jesus as having no interest for them. Explanations of Hebrew and Aramaic names and customs are given, viz: Boanerges 3: 17, Talitha cumi 5: 41, Corban 7: 11; see also 7: 2-4. Money is reduced to Roman currency (12: 42). Latin words are used in the Greek narrative and there are but few references to the Old Testament. The Romans would care nothing for the Old Testament or its ideas. They would ask, who was Christ? What did He do? What were His claims? Mark wrote to answer these questions and his work shows how thoroughly he understood his subject and his hearers.

The key to the character of the Romans is power, but it is the power of the state and limited to this world; it is force manifesting itself in action and

deeds. The Romans were mighty workers, casting up highways across empires and leaving behind great improvements to last for the ages. In time the state was deified as the greatest manifestation of power and then the Caesar who ruled over all. Scriptures and prophecy so potent with the Jew would count but little with the Roman. Reason and philosophy, so dear to the heart of the Greek, would be openly scoffed. But both Jew and Roman believed in the supremacy of law; with the one it was the law of an unseen God, with the other the law of the empire. Both started from the idea of duty, but with the one it was allegiance to the state, the other to the theocracy. Mark found the level of the Roman and began his work there to raise him to a higher one. Christ is presented as a mighty worker whose will was law. He is Master not only of the seen but of the unseen universe. He has power over the kingdom of disease, death, and nature. He speaks and the storm is stilled. He has power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again. His kingdom is omnipotent and everlasting. But it is a spiritual and unseen kingdom as well as a visible and temporal kingdom. Its laws are founded on mercy and forgiveness as well as upon righteousness. The removal of the giant evils and miseries of the world are sought through forgiveness and eradication of sin.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE ADVENT OF JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD. CL. 1: 1-13 v.

In this section Mark proclaims the divinity of Christ, and

then summarizes in a few verses the account of the preparation for His coming. The baptism and temptation.

II. THE KINGDOM OF GOD PROCLAIMED IN GALILEE. Ch. 1: 14-9 ch.

1. Jesus begins to teach with authority. 1: 22.

2. He retires frequently for communion with the Father and to make ready for fresh victories. 1: 35; 1: 45; 3: 7-13; 6: 6; 6: 31-32; 7: 24; 8: 27; 9: 2; 11: 11; 11: 19.

3. Christ predicts very plainly His passion and resurrection. 8: 34; 9: 1; 9: 31-32; 10: 32-34.

(a) What the kingdom of God is. Ch. 1: 14-3: 35.

Jesus comes to the earth with a new and divine power which reveals itself in His authoritative teaching, (1: 22) in the synagogue; in the healing of all manner of disease and in the forgiveness of sin. 1: 23-2: 12.

The opposition and criticism of the Scribes and Pharisees cause the purpose of the Gospel to be clearly shown in the calling of sinners to repentance (2: 17); the conduct of those engaged in the work (the children of the bride-chamber) and the true use of the Sabbath Day. Jesus is thronged by the multitude who come to Him. 2: 18-3: 12.

Christ calls twelve apostles to be with Him and share His labors. He contrasts His kingdom with that of Satan.

(b) The growth and destiny of the kingdom. Ch. 4: 1-34.

In the hearts of men, (the sower.) 4: 1-25. In the world. 4: 26-34.

(c) THE POWER OF CHRIST. 4: 35-41 to 5: 43.

Over nature in stilling the storm. 4: 35-41. Over unclean spirits. Disease and death (raising of Jairus' daughter). Ch. 5.

(d) ACTIVITIES OF THE KINGDOM. Ch. 6-8: 26.

Preaching in Nazareth Jesus is rejected by His own countrymen. His messenger, John, is killed by Herod. The workers are called apart to rest awhile. 6: 1-32. Jesus having compassion on the multitude feeds them. (Miracle of feeding the five thousand.) Christ seeing the distress of the disciples on the sea, walks on the water to them. Ch. 6. The work is again opposed

by Scribes and Pharisees, who come from Jerusalem. They are shown that true religion is of the heart and not in their traditions. The power and love of Christ are again shown by miracles. 7: 25-8: 26.

(e) THE GREAT CONFESSION. Ch. 8: 27-38.—Ch. 9: 5C.

Following this grand declaration of Christ's divinity Jesus teaches that the Kingdom of His power must be won through suffering and death. He from this time keeps this fact distinctly before the minds of the Apostles. 8: 27-38. The transfiguration is followed by the healing of the boy with the dumb spirit. Jesus again fortells His passion (9: 31-32) and shows that true greatness in the Kingdom consists in humility, self-denial and service.

III. THE KINGDOM OF GOD PROCLAIMED IN JUDEA. Ch. 10.

Jesus now makes His way through Judea to Jerusalem. On the road multitudes crowd about Him and He teaches them. The Pharisees try to puzzle Him with the question of divorce. Little children are brought to Him and He blesses them. A rich young ruler desiring to know the way to salvation, Jesus shows him the necessity of a single hearted service. The rich reward of God's Kingdom is set forth. 10: 28-31. The third time Jesus proclaims His suffering and death. 10: 32-35. The chapter closes with a definition of what greatness is in the Kingdom of God and the healing of the blind beggar Bartimaeus. We see in this section 10: (32-45) how difficult it was for the Apostles to comprehend the idea of a suffering Savior.

IV. THE TRIUMPHANT KING ENTERS JERUSALEM. Ch. 11:1-13:37.

The holy city is at last reached and Jesus makes a triumphal entry as its Lord and Master; the long expected Messiah. The fig tree, symbolical of the Jewish nation, which bore no fruit, is cursed and withers away. The temple is cleansed. Ch. 11. In Ch. 12 Jesus takes His critics to task and shows them, in the parables of the wicked husbandman and the tribute money, the questions of the resurrection and the greatest commandment, the true nature of His Kingdom and its requirements. In Ch. 13

He prophesies the destruction of the temple, Jerusalem and the end of the world.

V. THE SUFFERING KING. Ch. 14-15.

Christ now enters the shadow of the cross. He is anointed for His burial. 14: 3-9. The betrayal. 14: 1 and 2, also 10 and 11. The Lord's supper is instituted. 14: 12-26. The agony in Gethsemane and the apprehension. 14: 32-52. The Jewish trial and the denials of Peter. 14: 53-72. In Ch. 15 we have the sad story of the Roman trial before Pilate, the crucifixion, death and burial.

VI. CHRIST THE VICTORIOUS KING AND ASCENDED LORD. Ch. 16.

The holy women visited the tomb of Jesus to anoint His body and found that He had risen. They see the angel who made the glad announcement. In vs. 9-20 we have recorded the appearances after the resurrection, to Mary Magdalene, two disciples and to the eleven. We have also Jesus' last charge to His followers and His ascension.

XXXV

LUKE.

THE AUTHOR.

Luke, according to Eusebius the historian, was a native of Antioch in Syria and a physician (Col. 4:14.) He was a companion of Paul in some of his missionary work and was with him in his first and second Roman imprisonments when friend after friend had deserted him. Luke appears to have joined Paul at Troas (Acts 16: 9-40, where the "they" changes into "we") gone over into Macedonia with him and remained at Philippi for several years taking care of that young church. When Paul returned to Philippi Luke again joined his company and continued with him until the end. (The pronoun "we" is used in Acts 20: 5-28: 31.) See Philemon 24 and 2nd Tim. 4: 11. Luke, as the companion of Paul, had abundant opportunity to learn the exact facts about Christ's life. This gospel was probably written about 63 A. D.

THE CENTRAL IDEA.

The preface to this gospel shows the purpose of the writer. The dedication is made to Theophilus (lover of God) a Greek. This book has a world wide character which is peculiarly its own. The genealo-

gy of Christ is traced to Adam (3:38, the son of God) thus linking Christ not with the Jew but the first man, the representative of humanity. Matthew wrote for the Jew, to show him that Christ was the Messiah predicted by the prophets. Mark wrote for the Roman; he represented Christ as the mighty worker. The Jew belonged to a race which has made all the grandest ventures into the spiritual world but he could fraternize readily only with a descendant of Abraham and a believer in the prophets. The Roman was a man of action and he held brotherhood with the man who wielded power. Luke wrote his gospel for the Greek. The Greek represented another racial idea; he looked upon himself as having a mission to perfect humanity; he stood for the supremacy of reason. The full grown Greek was a world man; he could meet all men on the common platform of humanity as the Jew and Roman could not. But there were some serious defects in the old Greek view of things. In the effort to be broad, all of man was deified; the base and the noble. The animal passions were considered as godlike as the virtues. Venus, Bacchus and Pluto were as much gods as Jupiter, Minerva and Mercury. The Greek made his god just like himself; he humanized the clouds, the forests, the rivers, the seas; he peopled them with satyrs, fauns, muses and nymphs; each represented some side of man's nature. This world was his all. When Paul preached the resurrection from the dead at Athens he was scoffed at. There was no vision of a great and righteous God.

The problem of Luke was to meet the Greek mind on this broad platform of humanity and lift it up. He presents Christ as the ideally perfect Divine man, touching man on all sides and having an interest in man as man. He aims to show the unreasonableness of sin and the beauty of holiness. Christ is interested in the lowest and vilest of men, (15 Ch.) as well as in the most noble. He came to seek and save the lost. The powers of nature and of the lower world are obedient to this Divine man. Disease and pain flee at His touch. He is the Savior, not of one nation, but of all nations. God is brought near in Christ to meet the wants of the longing Greek soul. Christ is the universal man, the pattern and brother in all ages.

CHARACTERISTICS.

New Material. If this gospel be regarded as made up of 100 parts we find 59 peculiar to itself and only 41 common with one or more gospels. The most notable additions appear in chapters 1-4: 13 and in the incidents of the last journey to Jerusalem, 9: 51-18: 30. Some additions of the first part are: the revelations to Zacharias and Mary; the record of the presentation of Christ in the temple; Christ talking with the doctors in the temple at the age of twelve years; the genealogy which traces the descent of Christ to Adam. *The miracles found alone in Luke are:* the miraculous draught of fishes, 5: 4-11; raising the widow's son at Nain, 7: 11; the woman with the spirit of infirmity, 13: 11; the man with the dropsy, 14: 1; ten lepers, 17: 11; healing of Malchus,

22: 50; the parables peculiar to Luke are: two debtors, 7: 41; good Samaritan, 10: 25; importunate friend, 11: 5; rich fool, 12: 16; barren fig tree, 13: 6; lost piece of silver, 15: 8; prodigal son, 15: 11; unjust steward, 16: 1; the rich man and Lazarus, 16: 19; unjust judge, 18: 1; Pharisee and publican, 18: 10. There are a number of other remarkable utterances and incidents.

Dates. Luke connects his gospel with the annals of Syria and the Roman empire, viz: "There was in the days of Herod king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias. 1: 5. The taxing in the time of the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus when Cyrenius was governor of Syria (2: 1-2) when Christ was born. The preaching of the baptism of John in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea and Herod being tetrach of Galilee, etc. 3: 2. Luke alone informs us that Jesus was about thirty years old when He was baptized. 3: 23.

Good Tidings to all Men. This gospel opens with songs alone given by Luke. The Magnificat or song of Mary, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." 1: 46-55. The Benedictus or song of Zacharias, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel." 1: 68-79. The Nunc Dimmittis or song of Simeon. 2: 29-32. Also the Ave Maria (1: 28-33) and "The Gloria in Excelsis" "Glory to God in the highest" the song of the angels, (2: 14.)

Jesus came with glad tidings to the lost, (Ch. 15) to the poor, the humble and the despised. (Ch. 14 also 19: 10.)

The gospel of tolerance was proclaimed when Christ

chose a Samaritan (despised by the Jews) as a type of a perfect neighbor. 10: 25-37 also 9: 49-56.

The necessity of earnest prayer in order to receive the blessings of the kingdom is taught in the parables of "the friend at midnight" (11: 5-13) and the unjust judge (18: 1-8). Luke alone tells us that our Lord prayed; at His baptism; after cleansing the leper; before calling the twelve apostles; at His transfiguration; on the cross for His murderers and with His last breath.

ANALYSIS.

I. LITERARY PREFACE. Ch. 1: 1-4.

A statement of the reasons for writing this book.

II. THE ADVENT OF CHRIST THE DIVINE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD. Ch. 1: 5-4: 13

(a) The announcements of the birth of the forerunner John and of Jesus. The birth of John the Baptist. Ch. 1.

(b) The advent, infancy and boyhood of the Savior. Ch. 2.

(c) The manifestation of the Savior, the preaching of John announcing the coming of Jesus as the Messiah. 3: 1-18. The witness of the Holy Spirit. 3: 19-22. The genealogy of Jesus traced to Adam and to God. 3: 23-38. Christ the universal divine man.

(d) The victory over temptation. 4: 1-13. In this section we have set before us the preparation of Jesus for His great work as the Savior of all men. The places mentioned are Nazareth, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the country about Jordan and the Wilderness.

III. THE WORK OF THE SAVIOR FOR THE JEWISH WORLD. Ch. 4: 14-9: 50. In 4: 14 we read that Jesus returned into Galilee: He remained in this part of Palestine for some time. (See 9: 51). He exhibited His divine power especially for the salvation of Israel and laid the foundations for His kingdom. Jesus presents His claims.

(a) By preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth declaring Himself to be the Messiah (Is. 61: 1). He is rejected. 4: 14-30.

(b) By works in the city of Capernaum and vicinity. 4: 31-6: 11. He heals a demoniac, Peter's wife's mother and a multitude of the sick. 4: 31-44. In ch. 5-6: 11 we have other works. The miraculous draught of fishes, the cleansing of the leper, the pardon of sin, etc. Showing Christ's lordship over the spiritual and natural world. The Jews are filled with madness. 6: 11.

(c) By teaching about the kingdom. Ch. 6: 12-9: 50.

1. The principles of the kingdom are laid down in the sermon on the mount after the calling of the twelve apostles. Ch. 6: 12-49.

2. The parts of faith in man and compassion of Jesus are set forth in the healing of the centurion's servant and the raising of the widow's son at Nain. 7: 1-18.

3. All classes are embraced in this offer of salvation. As shown in the reply to John's disciples and in the incident of the anointing of Jesus. 7: 19-8: 3.

4. The development and growth of the kingdom depend upon how men hear the Word. (The parable of the sower). This teaching is followed by a manifestation of divine power. The stilling of the storm. The healing of the Gadarene demoniac and the raising of Jairus' daughter. 8: 4-56.

5. The apostles are sent out to preach the kingdom and emphasize its claims; when they return Jesus performs the miracle of feeding the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. 9: 1-17.

(d) By the great declaration of His divinity. 9: 18-50. "The Christ of God." 9: 20. This is followed by the prediction of His suffering, death and resurrection. 9: 22. The transfiguration and the renewed prediction of His death. 9: 23-50.

IV. THE WORK OF THE SAVIOR FOR THE GENTILE WORLD.
Ch. 9: 51-18: 30.

The most of the matter contained in these chapters is peculiar to Luke. Jesus is shown as the universal divine man in presenting His kingdom to the Gentile world. The events recorded took place on the last journey to Jerusalem through the Peraea.

(a) The Savior begins His journey to Jerusalem where He is to be delivered up to men to be crucified. He sends messengers into a Samaritan village but they are rejected.

This gives Him an opportunity to lay down the grounds of true discipleship. 9: 51-62.

(b) The care of Christ for the Gentile World and the nature of His Kingdom. Seventy disciples are sent out to work miracles and to preach the coming of the Kingdom. 10: 1-24. The true neighbor of the Kingdom (the good Samaritan.) The one thing needful (Martha and Mary) and the way to secure it (The Lord's Prayer.) 10: 25-11: 13.

(c) The contrast between the Kingdom of God and Satan, true religion and false conceptions of it. The worldiness of the Jew (rich fool) compared with the heavenly mind. These chapters (11: 14-13: 21) record the opposition with which the Pharisees met the teaching of Jesus and how He regarded it.

(d) Salvation is not for the Jew because he is a Jew but for all men who accept its terms. 13: 22-35. These are to do good; to be humble; to regard the poor; to obey the divine call; to lay proper foundations. (The man healed on the Sabbath, the guest at the wedding, the feast for the poor, the invitation to the great supper). Ch. 14.

(e) The cause of Christ's coming was to save sinners. The lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost boy. These parables (Ch. 15) show the great desire on the part of Christ to save lost men. Ch. 16-18: 30 with the parable of the unjust steward; Dives and Lazarus; the law of forgiveness and of prayer, set forth some reasons for men being in earnest about their own salvation and what to do to secure it.

V. THE SACRIFICE OF THE SAVIOR FOR JEW AND GENTILE. Ch. 18: 31-23: 59.

(a) As the Savior approaches Jerusalem He renews His prediction of His suffering, death and resurrection. He restores sight to a blind man. 18: 31-43. He receives the repentant publican Zacchaeus and gives the parable of the Pounds. 19: 1-27.

(b) He rides in triumph into the city and declares His authority. Jesus vindicates His claim as the Messiah. He predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and cleanses the Temple. 19: 28-48. In the 20th and 21st chapters there is a record of a "Day of Questions" in which the Priests and Scribes interrogate Jesus in regard to His authority; the lawfulness of giving tribute to Cæsar; the resurrection of the dead. The Savior (21) foretells the destruction of the Holy City and the end of the world.

(c) The Betrayal, Crucifixion and Death of the Savior. Ch. 22-23. The plots of enemies, the last supper and its significance, the betrayal, the arrest, the trials: before the high Priest; the Sanhedrin (Christ declares Himself to be the Messiah. 22: 66-71.); Pilate (first acquittal); Herod (second derision and acquittal). Final trial before Pilate and condemnation to death. The crucifixion, death and burial. Ch. 23.

VII. THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF THE SAVIOR OF ALL NATIONS. Ch. 24.

Thus Christ suffered and died and rose again on the third day as He had predicted and as the prophets had foretold (24: 25-27). He appears to His disciples on the way to Emmaus and to the eleven in the city of Jerusalem. He gives them parting instructions to preach in His name among all nations. He is carried up to heaven.

XXXVI.

JOHN.

THE AUTHOR.

To the Apostle John is ascribed the authorship of five New Testament books: The Fourth Gospel, three Epistles and Revelation. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome (Mark 1: 19-20 and Matt. 20: 20.) Zebedee was well off, having boats and hired servants; he is mentioned quite frequently as the father of James and John. Salome ministered to Christ of her substance and was present at the crucifixion, (Mark 15: 40; Matt. 27:56.) John early became a disciple of John the Baptist and was one of the first to follow Jesus; (Jn. 1: 40.) after this he seems to have gone back to his old employment, from which he was again called, (Matt. 4: 21.) to become an apostle of Jesus. At the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane he was one of the group of three: "Peter, James and John who were nearest to Christ and admitted to a more intimate relationship than the rest." The two principal elements in John's character are ruggedness and tenderness. (Mrk. 3: 17; Jn. 21: 20.) He followed his Master to the cross and was there to receive His last words. Jesus gave His mother into

his charge and John took her to his own home. (19: 26-27) John was with the apostles who met Jesus after His Resurrection. In the Acts there are several notices of John's work, (Acts Ch's. 3, 4 and 8: 14-25, also 15: 6.) During the latter part of his life he was at Ephesus. When he wrote the Apocalypse he was on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1: 9) He died about 100 A. D. and the date of his gospel is placed near the close of his life. He was peculiarly fitted by his intimate association with Christ to write this, the most spiritual of all the gospels.

THE PURPOSE.

John clearly states his purpose (20: 30-31): "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The great subject of this book is a Divine Being who became flesh and dwelt among men. There is here no birth, no boyhood, no slow growth into manhood. The Logos became flesh. Jesus is the Messiah from the first. "In the beginning was the Word." Jn. 1: 1.

WRITTEN FOR CHRISTIANS.

John's readers had heard the great facts of the gospel and had accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. They had attained to a new life with different aims, duties and aspirations; they were seeking the everlasting life of Glory with Christ of which this new life was the beginning. The Jew found the Mes-

siah in Christ: the Roman in the mighty worker: the Greek in the Ideal man and were thus in Jesus brought into a common bond of union. Each losing the narrowness of the racial idea was made a citizen of the Spiritual Kingdom of the Eternal Word.

TIMES AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

The gospel had been preached throughout the Roman Empire; the apostles were all dead except John. Jerusalem had been overthrown and the Temple destroyed. The Christian religion was no longer looked upon as a Jewish sect attached to the synagogue but had taken a form and shape of its own. It had achieved great triumphs. Persecution had purified and enriched the churches with the histories of the Martyrs for the Faith. The books of the New Testament had all been written except this gospel. Then John wrote this book the crown of them all to emphasize the fact of the good which came to earth through the Divine Son of God who was Himself God. He selected from a mass of material such things as he needed to show plainly this manifestation of the glory of Christ. (21: 25.)

THE SEVENFOLD WITNESS TO CHRIST.

1. The witness of the Father (5: 37; 8: 18).
2. The Son (8: 14; 18: 37)
3. His works (10: 25; 5: 36).
4. The Scriptures (5: 39-46).
5. John Baptist (1: 7; 5: 35).
6. The disciples (15: 27; 19: 35).
7. The Spirit (15: 26; 16: 14.)

THE ADDITIONS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

These additions, beyond what is found in the other gospels, may be divided into words and works of power.

The Words. Among them are the conversations with Nicodemus about the new birth (3); the woman of Samaria (4); the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles and the Dedication (7 and 8); the discourses concerning the shepherd and the sheep (10) and the great series connected with the last passover (14-17). These are all of the highest spiritual character.

The Works. Six miracles are recorded, but one of which is found in the other gospels (the feeding of the five thousand, 6: 1-15). The five miracles alone recorded by John show a very high display of Divine power. 1. At Cana the very substance of the water is changed (2: 1-11). 2. The nobleman's son is healed from a distance (4: 48-54). 4. The cure of a man diseased for 38 years (5). 3. A man born blind is restored to sight (9). 5. Lazarus who had been buried for four days is restored to life. (11). After Christ's resurrection John alone records the miracle of the miraculous draught of fishes (21: 6)

THE FOUR GREAT POINTS OF AGREEMENT IN THE GOSPELS.

There is a central mass of truth around which Matthew, Mark, Luke and John group their material. This is the fundamental element which makes the gospels "good news" to man, the sinner. (See Gregory's "Why Four Gospels").

1. *The Incarnation of the Son of God.* Each evangelist sets this truth forth in such a way as to make it plain to the candid reader. With Matthew Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us in fulfilment of prophecy; with Mark He is the mighty worker, the Son of God in human form; with Luke He is the Savior of the world, the Son of God; with John He is the Eternal Word made flesh.

2. *The life of the Son of God on earth* in human form and subject to human conditions. The central portion of each gospel is taken up with this life.

3. *The Death upon the Cross.* Large space is devoted to this event in all the gospels. This ground is gone over fully and carefully. They all give the triumphal entry into Jerusalem which was the public claim of Jesus to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world. The passover supper in which He put Himself in place of the Paschal Lamb whose sacrifice could alone deliver from sin; the agony and betrayal in Gethsemane, which marked His voluntary submission to His death; the trial and public vindication of His innocence; His rejection by the Jewish and Gentile world; His death by crucifixion for the sins of the whole world.

4. *The Resurrection.* The rising of Christ from the dead on the third day; His subsequent intercourse with His disciples; the giving of the commission to preach the gospel to the whole world and His ascension.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE INTRODUCTION. Ch. 1: 1-18.

Jesus Christ is presented as the Pre-existent Eternal, Divine Word manifested in the incarnation; heralded by John and commended to the faith of every man.

II. CHRIST REVEALS HIMSELF TO THE WORLD AS THE ETERNAL WORD. Ch. 1: 19-12: 50.

In time this section embraces about three years, and three passovers are recorded; Jesus was present at two of these passovers; at the feast of tabernacles and a feast of dedication in Jerusalem. He made several journeys into Galilee.

Jesus appears as the Incarnate Word of God and the only Light of the world.

(a) Christ is proclaimed the true Word of God. 1: 19-2: 11.

1. By the testimony of John the Baptist. 1: 19-34. "This is the Son of God."

2. By the testimony of the disciple. 1: 35-51. "We have found the Messiah." 41 v.

3. By the sign of a miracle, the substance of water changed. 2: 1-11. Cana in Galilee.

(b) Christ recognized by His work and words. 2: 12-4: 54.

1. As master in the Temple. 2: 13-25. Jerusalem.

2. In the discourse with Nicodemus on the new birth. 3: 1-36.

3. In the conversation with woman of Samaria on the true worship of God, Jesus declares Himself to be the Messiah. 4: 1-45.

4. In the miracle of the healing of the nobleman's son. 4: 46-54.

(c) Christ antagonized. 5: 1-12: 50.

These chapters reveal the conflict of the Light of the world with spiritual darkness.

1. The relation of Jesus to God the Father. "That all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father." (5: 23} 5: 1-47. (The miracle of healing. 5: 1-18).

2. The relation of Jesus to men. 6: 1-70. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." 6: 51. (The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. 6: 1-13). The principles declared in these two chapters greatly excited the Jews and led to the controversy in chapters 7-12.

3. Jesus proclaims Himself the Light of the world. ("I am the Light of the world." 8:12). The words reported in the 7-8 chapters were spoken at the Feast of the Tabernacles in Jerusalem, they show the tense situation at this time.

4. He proves by His works that He is the Son of God. ("The works I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." 10: 25). He restores sight to a man born blind. Ch. 9. He declares Himself the Good Shepherd. The Jews seek to take Him, but He escapes into Perea. Ch. 10.

5. He calls the dead back to life. He rides in triumph into Jerusalem and again proclaims His mission. But the Jews in spite of all He had done and said remain antagonistic ("Nevertheless among the chief rulers many believed on him: but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him." 12: 42). Ch's 11 and 12.

III. THE INNER REVELATION OF CHRIST TO HIS DISCIPLES. Ch. 13-17.

The discourses reported in these five chapters occupy but a single evening and were spoken by Christ in the supper room and on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. He manifests Himself to the disciples so that they may after His death and through the help of the Holy Spirit, win the world for Him. These last words show: how Jesus viewed His work; His relation to the Father; the disciples and the Holy Spirit.

(a) His love is shown in an act of humiliation. 13.

(b) His care in providing for His disciples. Christ's relation to God. 14. How the disciples are to bear fruit. 15.

(c) The promise of the Holy Spirit. 16.

(d) The High Priestly prayer for Himself, His disciples and for the whole church. 17.

IV. THE GLOBIFICATION OF CHRIST. Ch. 18-21.

Christ in His death becomes the source of life (12: 23-24; 17: 1) These four chapters show that the sufferings of our Lord were voluntary and in no way dimmed the glory of His majesty. The sufferings and death were not for Himself but for the whole world.

(a) The Betrayal and Trials. 18. The declaration of Christ that he is a King. 18: 37.

(b) The Crucifixion and Burial. 19.

(c) The Resurrection. 20. The declaration of Thomas, "My Lord and my God" shows that *The Word* had done His work and won perfect recognition of His claims with His disciples.

(d) Appearances of Christ to His disciples. 21.

XXXVII.

THE ACTS.

THE SCOPE OF THE BOOK.

In Time. The Acts is a record of what the Gospel accomplished in thirty years; from the Resurrection of Christ 33 A. D. to Paul's Roman imprisonment 63 A. D. The narrative begins in the exclusive Semitic city of Jerusalem; it ends in Rome, the metropolis of the world.

In History. It is the story of the growth and development of the Christian church.

Christ during His stay on earth, after His resurrection, said to His disciples "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: And ye shall be my witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (1:8) This program of the book was literally carried out. When the work begins, circumcision as well as baptism is required of every disciple (the church of Christ is outwardly a Jewish sect); when it closes every barrier between Jew and Gentile has been broken down. The agency and ministry of the Holy Ghost are specially prominent; He is referred to about seventy times. Peter and Paul are the two chief figures in the book; after the introduc-

tion (1:1-14.) the first twelve chapters center in the work of Peter and chapters 13 to 28 in Paul.

In Spirituality. In the Acts we find not only a history of what was said and done in the beginning of Christianity but also the record of a mighty spiritual power. The apostles were ordinary men until they were endued with the power of the Holy Spirit; they then went forth to preach the Gospel of Christ with indomitable resolution that made their advance irresistible and the triumph of their cause certain. We find in the apostles the purest and highest ideals of life coupled with a magnificent enthusiasm that stops at no obstacles. The secret of it all was their loyalty to and faith in Jesus Christ.

AUTHOR AND AUTHENTICITY.

Author. This book is from the same pen as the third Gospel. We can trace Luke's presence in the Acts by what are called the "we" sections. When he is with Paul he uses this pronoun "we." Luke joined the missionary band at Troas, (16: 10) and went with Paul to Macedonia; he seems to have remained behind at Philippi (18:1) where he is found after a lapse of seven years (20:5). He was appointed a delegate to collect and carry the offerings of the Gentile Christians to Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:18) and he accompanied Paul to the Holy City. (21: 18) It is thought probable that he was with Paul in his two years imprisonment at Cesarea and that he partly completed his Gospel in this place. He was with Paul in "his disastrous voyage to Rome and

remained with him in all probability until his liberation."

The time of writing the Acts was in the year 63 or 64 A. D.; the place, probably Rome.

Authenticity. Luke touches secular history, geography, biography, customs, and manners and consequently can be tested in a hundred ways.

"The arch of Thessalonica, now in the British Museum, the excavations at Ephesus, the inscription at Soli which bears the name of Sergius Paulus, discovered by General Censola, are all unsuspected witnesses of his truthful care. Jewish and Pagan historians bear him out to the letter in his account of the famine in the days of Claudius; the vanity and strange death of the popularity hunting Agrippi I; the cosmopolitan insouciance of his son Agrippi II; the greed of Felix; the fairness of Festus; the disdainful retirement of Gallio; the existence of an Italian band at Cesarea; Claudius' decree for the expulsion of the Jews from Rome; * * * the mode of dealing with Roman prisoners and the minutest details of ancient navigation." (Farrar. Messages of the Books.)

TEACHING.

The principal things taught are : (1). *The resurrection* of Christ. 2: 32-33; 4: 10; 40-41; 13: 32-37; 26: 23; upon this is built the assurance that Jesus will come again. (2) *The judgment.* 3: 19-21; 10: 42; 17: 31. (3) *Repentance;* all men are called upon, to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. 2: 38; 5: 31; 10: 43; 13: 38-39; 14: 15; 17: 30-31. (4)

The *forgiveness* of sins and the *gift* of the Holy Spirit. 2: 38; 8: 15; 10: 45; 19: 2.

The apostles adapted themselves and their teaching to men of different habits of thought, culture, manners and nationality while not abating one jot the principles of their teaching. (1) To the Jew they appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures and what was written in the law and the prophets about Christ. 2: 14-36; 3: 19-26; 7: 2-53; 13: 17-41; 28: 23. (2) With the farmers at Lystra they placed their teaching of Christ on a broad natural theology. 14: 15-17. (3) The Greek Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, Paul met on their own ground. 17: 22-31. These masterful first teachers are careful not to offend men but to win them to the love of Christ.

Organization and Worship. Believers were not left to themselves but were carefully gathered into (1) a church with a distinct and definite constitution. Paul was an organizer of churches. (2) Officers were appointed; they were called: overseers (20: 28); bishops and deacons (Phil. 1: 1); elders (Tit. 1: 5-7; Acts 11: 30; 14: 23; 20: 17). (3) The time of meeting for worship was at first every morning, (2: 46,) afterwards on the first day of the week (20: 7.) The supper of the Lord formed the center of the feast of their worship (1 Cor. 11: 23-26); this was opened with a blessing and closed with a thanksgiving. It was a time of joy, hopefulness and helpfulness.

ANALYSIS.

This book has been divided into three parts, according to

the three great events narrated in it showing the widening circle of the activity of the work of the Holy Spirit.

I. THE CHURCH OF JERUSALEM.

Chapters 1-7: 60. From the descent of the Holy Ghost to the martyrdom of Stephen. Jerusalem is the starting point. The disciples were bidden to tarry here until they were endued with power from on high.

(a) Last instructions of Christ and His ascension. 1: 4-11.

(b) The Day of Pentecost. The first sermon and the first baptism. Condition of the first church. 1: 12-2: 47.

(c) The first miracle and persecution. Peter and John heal a lame man through the power of Christ and are put in prison by the Jews. 3: 1-4: 23. They are let go and the church rejoices. 4: 24-31.

(d) The blessed state of the church. 4: 32-37. Miracles. The appointment of the first deacons. Ch. 5 and 6.

(e) The sermon of Stephen and his martyrdom. Ch. 7.

In consequence of the persecution that arose at this time the church was scattered abroad and a wider circle of influence was entered upon.

II. THE CHURCH OF PALESTINE.

Ch. 8-12: 25. From the martyrdom of Stephen to the call of Paul to the missionary work among the Gentiles. The persecution which came upon the church after the death of Stephen seemed a great calamity; in reality it was a great blessing. The disciples now began to preach the gospel in Judea and Samaria.

(a) The Samaritans receive the gospel at the hands of Philip; the Ethiopian Eunuch is converted and baptized. 8: 1-40.

(b) Saul is converted. 9: 1-30.

(c) Peter is shown by a vision what should be his attitude to the Gentiles. Ch. 10 and 11.

(d) Persecution again comes upon the church. Ch. 12.

The center of Christianity is changed (in this section) from Jerusalem to Antioch where the disciples are first called Chris

tian. Persecution again comes and the circle of the Gospel influence is again widened.

III. THE CHURCH OF THE GENTILES.

From the call of Paul to the missionary work (Ch. 13: 1) to his imprisonment in Rome. (In reality this work has not yet closed). With the exception of the account of the apostolic council in the 15th chapter this section is alone concerned with the work of the great apostle to the Gentiles and the spread of the gospel to the imperial city of Rome, which now becomes the center of Christianity. Ch. 13-28.

(a) First missionary journey of Paul with Barnabas (and John who turned back 13: 13) from Antioch through the isle of Cyprus and Pamphylia and Pisidia in Asia Minor and the return to Antioch in Syria. Ch. 13 and 14.

(b) Second missionary journey of Paul. Ch. 15 to Ch. 18: 22. After the apostolic council was held (Ch. 15) to settle certain questions about the Gentiles, Paul chose Silas and went from Antioch through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches; visiting Derbe and Lystra. Timothy is chosen as a companion. At Troas in Mysia Paul departs for Europe (being called thither by the Holy Spirit 16: 9); he visits cities in Macedonia and Greece; he returns to Antioch in Syria by way of Asia Minor and Cesarea in Palestine.

(c) Third missionary journey of Paul. 18: 23-21: 16. Starting from Antioch, Paul visits the churches in Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece and this time returns to Jerusalem.

(d) Concluding acts in the life of Paul. Ch. 21: 17-28: 31. The success of Paul in preaching the Gospel in Asia Minor and Europe aroused the fanatical part of the Jews against him when they saw him in the Temple. They thought he had brought Gentiles into the sacred precincts. Paul is arrested and makes his defense before the people, the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, Felix, Festus and Herod Agrippa II at Cesarea. 21: 17-26: 32. He is sent to Rome to be tried where the account of Luke leaves him. Ch. 27 and 28.

Churches have been established in many cities and provinces.

A new and powerful force for righteousness has entered the world. The universal aims of the Gospel are seen in clearer light. Progress is made from an apparently Jewish sect to a universal church. The Gospel is seen to be full of hope and joy. Christ is shown to be more than able to fulfill His promises. Yet we now know that the Acts was only a book of beginnings and that Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome were only birthplaces of Christianity.

XXXVIII.

ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLES.

Out of the 27 books which compose the New Testament, 21 are in the form of letters by six different authors. To Paul are ascribed 13 letters; to John 3; to Peter 2; to James 1; to Jude 1; it is uncertain who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews.

“The foundation of Christianity is laid in a narrative, but the first and greatest development of Christian theology is laid in a collection of letters.”

The causes of this condition of things are not obscure. (1) “Christianity was the first great missionary religion”; it was the first to break the bonds of race and clime and aim at embracing all peoples and entering all lands. (2) After Christianity had been established in the scattered cities of Asia Minor, Greece and Italy, the churches in their trials and perplexities naturally appealed to the apostles and especially to Paul; the result of the appeal is found in the epistles. There is every reason to believe that a number of apostolic letters have been lost. A system of exchange was carried on among the churches by which sooner or later, most if not all, the epistles were read in the different churches (Col. 4: 16).

Copies were taken and so began the collection of the New Testament writings.

The means of communication were easy; one language, the Greek, was everywhere spoken; law and order were maintained by the Roman legionaries; well made roads ran to the remotest portions of the empire; the world was at peace.

We gain from this kind of literature a very vivid impression of the condition of the early churches. We look directly into their troubles, their joys, their customs and doctrines. We have a clearer impression of how matters actually were than we could probably get from a formal treatise or carefully prepared book. The interest in some of the questions discussed has passed away but the principles remain and the doctrinal value is unquestioned. Here is the record of a great battle fought and won for the cause of Christ. "These epistles touch with clearness and certainty on the very highest truths of human aspiration and action."

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL.

In order to understand the letters of Paul it is necessary to know the circumstances and occasion of their composition. Paul was probably converted when he was thirty years of age; he wrote his first epistle (1 Thess.) sixteen years after his conversion. All his letters come in the period of his life from 46 to 61 years.

They have been divided into four groups.

1. Those which relate to Christ's second coming,

written during the second missionary journey: 1 Thessalonians, 52 A. D. at Corinth; 2 Thessalonians, 53 A. D., probably at Corinth.

2. The Anti-Judaic group [controversial and doctrinal] written during the third missionary journey: 1 Corinthians, 57 A. D. at Ephesus; 2 Corinthians, 58 A. D. probably at Philippi; Galatians and Romans, 58 A. D. at Corinth.

3. The christological and personal letters written during his first imprisonment in Rome: Philippians, about 62 A. D.; Colossians, Philemon and Ephesians, about 63 A. D.

4. Epistles of Paul's last years. The main theme is the duty of a Christian pastor in guiding his church: 1 Timothy and Titus, about 66 A. D., probably in Macedonia; 2 Timothy, written in Rome 67 or 68 A. D.

In the chronological study of these epistles we notice an advance in Paul's thought; only one instance will be cited: In 1st Thessalonians he holds out the hope of Christ's second coming; in this way are believers to be relieved of their burdens and their enemies vanquished; but after his larger experience, his stonings, scourgings, shipwrecks, he writes to the church at Corinth in another tone; he has much to say of the dissolution of the body, striking of frail tents and entering into everlasting habitations. It is no longer the coming of the Lord but the departure of the believer that is to effect the happy meeting. His very sufferings have taught Paul what the divine strength is.

The epistles are mostly cast in a certain form; there is a sameness of structure in all.

1. A salutation or greeting in which the subject of the letter is usually stated.

2. A thanksgiving for those addressed, for their Christian life and conduct.

3. A doctrinal part in which Paul enters into the exposition of some great Christian truth.

4. A section in which he applies practically the truth he has set forth.

5. Personal matters, salutations, messages, etc.

6. An autograph conclusion to authenticate the entire letter.

We notice in all Paul's epistles, his loyalty to Christ and the spirit of hopefulness, helpfulness and joy. "He fought out and won for all time the battle of a full and free salvation; of faith as against works; of mercy as against sacrifice. He showed that the true worship of the Christian consists in spirituality, not in ceremonialism; in heart service, not in outward ritual; in religion of the life, not in forms of service; in being, not in doing."

PAUL, THE AUTHOR OF ROMANS.

Paul, a Hebrew by descent, was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia; this city was famous as a seat of classical learning. The apostle was educated under the great Pharasaic teacher, Gamaliel, in Jerusalem. Paul was one of the earliest and fiercest persecutors of the Christians. It was while on his way to the city of Damascus as the inquisitor of the Sanhedrin that he

was suddenly converted (Acts 9: 3-6) by the appearance of the Risen Christ.

After baptism and a special commission to preach the Gospel he proclaimed the Word in Damascus; being persecuted he retired to Arabia for awhile and again returned to Damascus. At the end of three years (Gal. 1:17), he visited Jerusalem being the guest of Peter the apostle for fifteen days (Gal. 1:18). He now worked in Syria and Cilicia as an evangelist for about three years. Barnabas sought Paul at Tarsus (Acts 11:25-26), and brought him down to Antioch, the then great center of Christian activity; Paul remained here a year (Acts 11:26), at the close of which he was sent with Barnabas to Jerusalem with contributions for the relief of the Judean brethren (Acts 11:29-30). Upon their return from Jerusalem (Acts 12:25), they were called by the Holy Ghost to the great missionary work (Acts 13:2), in which Paul continued until his death. He made three missionary tours; at the close of the third he was arrested in Jerusalem and sent to Rome; he was released from his imprisonment there and again went out among the churches; apprehended and a second time in prison at Rome; he finally laid down his life for the cause he loved so much. From his conversion to his death his life was one long martyrdom.

THE ROMAN CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

At the beginning of the Christian era Roman heathen writers speak of the large number of Jews dwelling in the city of Rome; they occupied a cer-

tain quarter inside the walls and were allowed special privileges. This colony was probably founded by the captive Jews whom the Roman general, Pompey, sent to the Imperial City when he entered Jerusalem in 63 B. C. The Christian church at Rome was most probably founded by the visitors from this city who were present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This Christian company was composed both of Jews and Gentiles, for in the Epistle to the Romans Paul addresses both classes. (Romans 1:6-13; 2:17-24; 9:13; 7:1; and Ch. 9-11).

OCCASION AND DATE OF ROMANS.

Occasion. Paul had for some time desired to see Rome (Acts 19:21; Romans 1:11; 15:24-28), and as this would be his first visit, it was no more than a courteous act that he should give notice of his intention to visit the brethren; then it might be that the Romans had heard false or distorted reports of what he believed and taught: hence he takes occasion in this epistle after the salutation clearly and logically to set forth the gospel which he believed and taught. This letter is the ripe fruit of over twenty years (since his conversion) of service, experience, preaching and prayer in the cause of Christ.

Date. This letter was written at Corinth in the three months he spent there during his third missionary journey. (Compare Acts 19:21; 20:1-3; Romans 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14; 2 Timothy 4:20).

CENTRAL THOUGHT.

The theme is: Justification by faith and not by works. There are four main positions.

1. All are guilty before God (Jew and Gentile).
 2. All need a savior.
 3. Christ died for all.
 4. We are all (through faith) one body in Him.
- The thought may be put in other ways but all to the same purpose. The Doctrine of Sin and The Doctrine of Grace; or The Universality of Sin and The Universality of Grace.

ANALYSIS.

This epistle has two great sections. Ch. 1-11, Doctrinal. Ch. 12-16, Practical.

INTRODUCTION. Ch. 1:1-15.

- (a) Paul's salutation to the Roman church. 1:1-7.
- (b) Thanksgiving for the faith of this church. 1:8-15.

DOCTRINAL. Ch. 1:16-11:36.

(a) The great theme stated. Justification by faith, (See Habakkuk 2:4). Ch. 1:16-17, or righteousness by faith.

(b) All have sinned and all are guilty. 1:18-3:20.

The Gentiles without the law of Moses (1:18-32), and the Jews with the law, have failed to attain to righteousness. 2:1-3:20. The Universality of Sin.

(c) Righteousness for all comes through faith in Jesus Christ (3:21-31) not by the law or works (3:27). The Universality of Grace.

1. Abraham was justified by faith and not by works. Ch. 4.
 2. The blessedness of justification by faith in Christ. Ch. 5:1-11. Through the first man came death, but through the second Adam came life. Ch. 5:12-19. "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Ch. 5:20-21. The only remedy for sin is in Christ.

3. The objection against free grace is that it will multiply

sin, but the apostle says, sin is annihilated through union with Christ. Ch. 6.

4. The objection that free grace will discredit the law is answered by showing (a) that the law has power over a man only so long as he lives in sin; (b) the law is given to set forth the nature of sin and the certainty of punishment.

The believer, justified by his faith in Christ is dead to the law while quickened to a new and holy life by the Spirit. Christ gives the victory over sin. Ch. 7: 1-8: 11.

5. An earnest exhortation founded on these truths. 8: 12-30. The victory through faith in Christ. 8: 31-39.

(c) The apparent rejection of Israel. Ch. 9-11.

In these three chapters Paul takes up the problem of the unbelief of Israel. This is a dark fact—the people best prepared to receive Christ had rejected Him.

1. The cause and the justice of the rejection. Ch. 9-10. The cause is found in verse 32, that they sought righteousness through the law and not by faith. In this rejection, Paul argues, God has not failed to keep His promise to His people, because the calling of this nation was a matter of election; the coming in of the Gentiles was also foretold, and that not all Israel but only a remnant would be saved. 9: 26-27.

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. Ch. 10.

2. The rejection of Israel is partial not absolute ; temporary not final ; after the Gentiles have been received Israel will be restored. Ch. 11.

II. PRACTICAL. Ch. 12-16.

(a) Advice and exhortation. 12: 1-15: 13.

1. The Christian's duty to the church and his conduct outside the church. Ch. 12.

2. The Christian's duty to the state and society. Ch. 13.

3. The Christian duty of toleration and supreme trust in Christ. 14: 1-15: 13.

(b) Salutations. 15: 14-16: 27.

1. Paul's apology and explanation for addressing the Roman church. 15: 14-33.

2. Greetings to various persons and farewell words. Ch. 16.

XXXIX.

I AND II CORINTHIANS.

THE CITY OF CORINTH.

Corinth, when Paul visited it, was the largest and most important city in Greece. It contained about 400,000 inhabitants. When Greece was independent it was at the head of the Achæan league. In 146 B. C. the Roman general Mummius took and destroyed the city. For a century it lay desolate. In 46 B. C. the emperor Julius Cæsar rebuilt it and its former splendor soon returned.

Situated on the well known isthmus, the commerce of the world flowed through its two harbors: Lechæum and Cenchreae.

The population consisted of Greeks, Jews, Italians and a mixed multitude. Sailors, merchants, adventurers and refugees from all quarters filled the streets. Here was held a perpetual vanity fair. The vices of the east and west met and clasped hands in the work of human degredation.

Religion itself was put to ignoble uses. The Greek goddess Aphrodite had here a magnificent temple in which a thousand priestesses ministered to a base worship.

Greek philosophy, in its decay showed itself in endless discussions about words, non essentials. a

tendency to set intellectual above moral distinctions and a denial of the future life for the sake of unlimited enjoyment in the present.

In the midst of such almost hopeless elements Paul preached ; beginning his work late, probably November, in the year 51 A. D.

THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH.

The account of the founding of this church is given in acts 18: 1-18. When Paul came to Corinth from Athens (on his second missionary journey) he seems to have fully understood the character of the city ; his determination was not to know anything there " save Jesus Christ and him crucified." 1 Cor. 2: 1-2. With such great evils to fight he needed a pure and simple Gospel.

The apostle found a home with Aquila and Priscilla his wife, Jews lately expelled from Rome by order of the emperor Claudius. This Claudian edict, the Roman writer Suetonius tells us, was made on account of disturbances over Christianity in Rome.

Paul at first preached in the Jewish synagogue but when he openly proclaimed Christ he was driven out and turned to the Gentiles. After eighteen months had passed the Jews determined to send Paul out of the city; they caught him and brought him before the new proconsul Gallio (brother of the philosopher Seneca) but he would not listen to them and released the prisoner. He remained for some time after this teaching in Corinth and then departed for Ephesus on his way back to Jerusalem. From An-

tioch where he began a third missionary journey, after passing over the country of Galatia and Phrygia, he came again to Ephesus where he remained three years. Acts 20: 31.

Apollos "an eloquent man and mighty in the scriptures" did much to strengthen the Corinthian church in the absence of Paul. Acts 18: 24-28; 19: 1.

OCCASION OF THE EPISTLES.

The pressure of heathen customs and surroundings upon the young Corinthian church was very great. It was to be expected that discussions and parties would arise. To define the relation which Christians should assume towards the political, religious and domestic institutions of the heathen was a matter of no little delicacy and difficulty.

Rumors of a bad state of affairs in the church came to Paul in Ephesus, to correct which he wrote a letter that is now lost. 1 Cor. 5: 9. Again there came more definite reports of difficulties, from certain ones who came directly from Corinth (1 Cor. 1: 11; 16: 17) and a letter from the church asking advice on certain questions. 1 Cor. 7: 1. In reply Paul wrote

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS. The subjects dealt with are: the supremacy of Christ over all parties; the correction of moral, social and ecclesiastical disorders; the true doctrine of the resurrection. After the dispatch of the letter by the hands of Titus (probably about Easter 57 A. D.) Paul was very anxious in regard to its reception.

He left Ephesus and went to Troas. 2 Cor. 2: 12-

13. Not finding Titus, he sailed for Macedonia (probably Philippi) where after a time Titus joined him. The report from the Corinthian church was encouraging from the fact that many of the abuses had been corrected but discouraging in that the character and authority of Paul had been openly attacked.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS was written by Paul to express his joy that his converts had heeded his words, to vindicate his "Principles of Action" and his authority as an apostle.

THE KEYNOTE OF BOTH EPISTLES is found in Paul's loyalty to Christ. 1. Cor. 2: 1-5. Also 1: 31.

The touchstone of all service is Love. Ch. 13.

The keystone of the arch of Christianity is the resurrection of Christ. 1 Cor. 15: 14.

Little details are decided by great principles. Refer all to Christ; be fully persuaded in your own mind; let all things be done with charity; live in the world but not of it. "The eagle which soars in the air does not worry itself how it is to cross rivers."

ANALYSIS I AND II CORINTHIANS.

I CORINTHIANS.

I. SALUTATION AND THANKSGIVING. Ch. 1: 1-9.

II. CORRECTION OF DIVISIONS AND PARTY SPIRIT. 1: 10-4: 21.

It having been reported to Paul that there was a spirit of contention and that four parties were striving for the mastery in the church; he rebukes the party spirit and sets forth the principles of his preaching.

(a) Christ alone is the center of the Christian system. 1: 10-31.

(b) Faith stands not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. Ch. 2.

(c) The only foundation is in Christ. He alone can give the increase; to Him alone be the glory. Ch. 3.

(d) Faithfulness, the chief thing required in the ministers of Christ. Ch. 4.

III. CORRECTION OF MORAL DISORDERS. Ch. 5-7.

In consequence of the close contact of the church with heathendom grave moral evils found their way into the fold. Paul deals with these.

(a) Case of the incestuous person. The offender is to be expelled, because the leaven of evil separates men from Christ. Ch. 5.

(b) The sin of going to law in heathen courts. Christians ought to settle their own disputes. 6: 1-11. Sins of the body. No man should commit a sin as his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. 6: 12-20.

(c) Advice concerning marriage. Duties of married persons. 7: 1-16. *The purpose of the Gospel* is not to antagonize but to christianize the natural relations between society and the believer. 7: 17-40.

IV. CORRECTION OF SOCIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL MISCONCEPTIONS. Ch. 8-14.

(a) The question of eating meats offered in idol worship is decided on the ground of love rather than knowledge. Ch. 8.

(b) The preacher of the gospel has a right to be supported by the church. Ch. 9.

(c) The principles to be observed in eating and drinking. True Christian liberty. The proper celebration of the Lord's Supper. Ch. 10-11.

(d) Use and abuse of spiritual gifts. Their object the good of the church. Ch. 12.

(e) The greatness of love. Ch. 13.

(f) The end to be sought in every spiritual gift is the edification and upbuilding of the church. Ch. 14.

V. THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION. Ch. 15.

Paul lays great stress upon this doctrine. "If Christ be not risen from the dead, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain." V. 14.

VI. PARTING DIRECTIONS, EXHORTATIONS AND SALUTATIONS. Ch. 16.

II CORINTHIANS.

I. SALUTATION. Ch. 1: 1-2.

II. PAUL'S PRINCIPLES AND WAYS OF WORKING. Ch. 1: 3-7: 16.

In these chapters the apostle does what he can to remove any feeling of bitterness which may have been produced in the Corinthian church by his dealing with a certain evil in the previous epistle. He also vindicates his spiritual ministry.

(a) His love for the church and desire for its spiritual advancement. Ch. 1-2. He put off his visit that he might not come to them in sorrow. He rejoices in the good news that came by Titus. We see here the great desire of Paul to build up this church in Christ.

(b) His ministry was a communication by the Spirit and not a self-appointed task. Ch. 3. He was in body, weak; the power was of God. Ch. 4.

(c) He was sustained by hope of the future life; absent from the Lord yet never out of His sight. Ch. 5.

(d) An earnest exhortation to the church; to receive and live the Gospel which he preached; for separation from the world; unity with God. Ch. 6.

Closing words of this section. His rejoicing that they had received his words so well. Ch. 7.

III. THE COLLECTION FOR THE POOR CHRISTIANS IN JERUSALEM. Ch. 8-9.

The liberality of the Macedonian churches. The work and character of Titus who is sent to forward the contributions. The blessing of deeds of love.

IV. PAUL'S VINDICATION OF HIS AUTHORITY AS AN APOSTLE. Ch. 10-13.

He has been attacked in his person, character and teaching by parties in the Corinthian church who would overthrow his authority and ruin the church. These four chapters are a magnificent setting forth of his apostolic claims.

(a) His power, his authority, his glory, are not in his bodily presence or his letters but in the spiritual might of God. Ch. 10.

(b) His preaching is the pure Gospel of Christ. He had come to Corinth without charge to the church. In bodily labor, trials and persecutions he had excelled them all. Ch. 11.

(c) Visions and Revelations. He has the highest qualifications; he has been caught up to the third heaven. But he will glory only in his infirmities. He is not behind the very chiefest of the apostles (V. 11). His object is not to boast but to put an end to disorders in the church. Ch. 12.

(d) The apostle declares his intention to visit the church. By the power of Christ in him he will not spare the evil. His desire is only for righteousness. Ch. 13: 1-10.

(e) Farewell greetings and messages. Ch. 13: 11-14.

XL.

GALATIANS.

THE GALATIANS.

The Country. The name Galatia is used in two ways. Geographically to denote the country inhabited by the Celtic tribes. Politically it meant the Roman province, which also included Lycaonia, Isauria and parts of Phrygia and Pisidia. Luke in the Acts (13: 14; 14: 6; 16: 6) and Paul in his Epistle (1: 1) seem to use these names in the geographical sense.

History. The Galatians were descended from the Gauls who originally inhabited the northern and central parts of the country we now call France. In the fourth century B. C. they sacked the city of Rome and in the third century B. C. they invaded Northern Greece and entered Asia Minor. But the main tide of conquest was rolled back. Those that remained were confined within the comparatively narrow limits of Galatia. When Paul visited this country the land was divided and in possession of three tribes: The Trocmi, the Tolistobogi and the Tectosages; their chief towns were Tavium, Pessinus and Ancyra.

Character. The Galatians were Celts and had the Celtic qualities. "They came of a race which shook

all nations and founded none." They were quick to receive impressions and quick to lose them. They received Paul with great enthusiasm and almost as suddenly turned against him. Gal. 4: 13-16.

Founding of the Churches. After the Apostolic conference at Antioch (Acts. 15) Paul started on a second missionary tour. In the course of his journey he passed through Galatia 52 A. D. Acts 16: 1. Luke tells us nothing of the missionary work of the great Apostle in this region. From Gal. 4: 13-16 we learn that Paul was taken sick and while too ill to travel he yet managed to preach the Gospel. The Word was received with great enthusiasm. Gal. 4: 14-15. The Galatians had a second visit from the Apostle in 55 A. D. during his third missionary journey; he seems to have found it necessary at that time to strengthen the disciples. Acts 18: 23. The particular names of the churches to which this epistle is addressed are not mentioned. Gal. 1: 2.

THE EPISTLE.

Occasion and Subject. The converts at first did well, but soon Judaizing teachers found their way in to the young Gentile churches. They claimed that the Jewish law was binding upon Christians. They acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah but still looked for salvation through the works of the law. They insisted on the rite of circumcision. The authority of Paul and the gospel which he preached were disparaged. It was a great controversy and Paul proved himself equal to it. In the first two chapters of the

Epistle he shows how he received his gospel through the revelation of Christ; he vindicates his authority as an apostle. In the third and fourth chapters he treats of the relation of Christ to the law and proves that justification is not through the deeds of the law but by faith in Christ. In the last two chapters he successfully combats the idea that liberty and license are the same.

Date. The time cannot be definitely fixed. It was probably written not long after Paul's second visit (Acts 18: 23). Many scholars think it was written just after 2 Corinthians from its resemblance to this epistle in the self vindication chapters, Gal. 1: 2; and before the epistle to the Romans as that is practically an expansion of the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ of Gal. 2-4. It is possible that the letter was sent from Corinth where Paul spent part of the winter of A. D. 57-58.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1:1-10.

Salutation. 1:1-5.

Subject of the Epistle: The Defection of the Galatian churches. 1:6-10.

II. PERSONAL. THE DIVINE COMMISSION GIVEN TO PAUL AS AN APOSTLE. 1:11-2:21.

Certain persons had been with the Galatian churches trying to win them from Paul and the Gospel he set forth. Paul makes a statement of his claims and gives a sketch of his life.

(a) The Gospel he preached came not from man but through a revelation of Jesus Christ. 1:11-12. This he shows from the circumstances of his conversion and intercourse with the other apostles. 1:13-2:21.

III. DOCTRINAL. JUSTIFICATION IS BY FAITH. Ch. 3-4.

(a) The Galatian churches had received the Spirit through faith and not by the law. Why should they turn back? 3:1-5.

(b) Abraham, a witness to the power of Faith. 3:6-9.

(c) The curse of the law is removed by faith in Christ. 3:10-14.

(d) The covenant of the promise of Christ was before the law. 3:15-18.

(e) The subordination of the law to faith. The purpose of the law in bringing men to Christ. The danger of returning to the law. 3:19-4:11.

(f) Paul's personal appeal. 4:12-21.

(g) The allegory of Isaac and Ishmael, representing the two covenants showing liberty alone in Christ. 4:22-31.

IV. PRACTICAL. APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINAL TEACHING. Ch. 5-6:10.

(a) An exhortation to stand fast in the liberty of Christ; this liberty excludes Judaism. 5:1-12.

(b) A warning against the abuse of Christian liberty. The works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. 5:13-26.

(c) An appeal for charity in the case of an erring brother. 6:1-6.

(d) Sowing and Reaping. 6:7-10.

V. AUTOGRAPH CONCLUSION. 6:11-18.

Summary of the Epistle. The glory of the apostle is in the cross of Christ. Benediction.

XLI.

EPHESIANS.

THE CITY OF EPHESUS.

Ephesus was, next to Rome, the most important city visited by Paul. It was settled mainly by colonists from Athens but Asiatic elements of race and thought were not lacking in the population. It was a great commercial, political and religious center. What was done here was widely heralded.

The two great architectural features were: (1) The Temple of Diana which was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It stood outside the city walls and faced the east. It was built of marble. The dimensions were 324 feet long by 164 feet wide. The time spent in its erection was 220 years. The image of the goddess, within "a gorgeous shrine," was placed in the center of the temple surrounded by curtains. This famous building was destroyed by the Goths in 262 A.D. Acts 18: 24-41. (2) The Theater, which was excavated on the western slope of Mt. Coresus would seat 50,000 spectators. Near by was the Stadium or race course where the fights between wild beasts, and men and beasts took place. Acts 19: 29; 1 Cor. 9: 24-25; 15: 32.

PAUL'S VISITS TO EPHEBUS.

The Apostle first came to the city when he was returning from his second missionary tour. Acts 18:18-21. He brought with him Aquila and Priscilla, whom he left there when he departed.

His own stay was brief. A favorable impression was made as he was asked to remain and urged to return. During his absence Apollos visited Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28; 19:1) and passed on to Corinth. Paul, during his third missionary journey, again stopped at Ephesus and this time he remained three years. Acts 20:31. This was a period of extraordinary success; the impression made upon the people was very great; the influence of the Gospel was spread throughout Asia. Besides the power of *the Word*, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul." At length a tumult was raised by Demetrius, who "made silver shrines for Diana" and Paul departed into Macedonia. Acts 19:1-41; 20:1. On his return he stopped at Miletus (30 miles south of Ephesus) and sent for the elders of the church of Ephesus to meet him. Acts 20:16-38. To them he spoke his farewell words, exhorting them to stand fast in the faith and foretelling the bonds and afflictions that awaited him.

THE EPISTLE.

Place of Writing and Date. Paul, the prisoner, arrived in Rome in 61 A. D. (probably in March). During the two years he lived in his own hired house many came to him. (Acts. 28:16-31.) Among his visitors were envoys from the distant churches;

Epaphroditus from Philippi, Tychicus from Ephesus, Epaphras from Colossæ; also John Mark, Luke and Timotheus.

The Apostle wrote, at this time, four epistles, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians.

The Inscription. Many scholars think that this Epistle was a circular letter written for the edification of all the churches of Asia and sent to the church of the capital city. We find in it no local allusions to the state of any particular church and no naming of friends as in other epistles. The inscription at "Ephesus" is wanting in two of the oldest manuscripts: the Vatican and Sinaitic. There is a marked similarity between this epistle and that to the Colossians. This is natural as they are not far apart in time of writing.

Contents. In passing from Galatians to Ephesians we leave the arena of heated controversy and come into a place of quiet meditation upon a great theme.

Unity in Christ is the subject. God's eternal purpose is disclosed. Unity of the church in Christ, unity of the Jewish and Gentile branches in Him, unity of all the individual members in one body in His church. This union is spiritual and not mechanical; holy and pure, therefore sin is excluded. Christ is given sway over all things "both which are in heaven and which are on earth." Eph. 1:10 and 21. This truth Paul looks upon as the mystery of the ages now revealed to him. We find here expressed "the idea of God's eternal plans (1:4) realized in the course of the ages and the unity in Christ

of redeemed humanity with the family of heaven in the heavenlies." One kingdom; the risen and glorified Christ, the Head of that kingdom. 1:22-23.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-23.

(a) Salutation. 1: 1-2.

(b) Thanksgiving and Thesis. 1: 3-14. Unity in Christ. He who is the head of the church is the center of the universe. The eternal purpose of God in Salvation is now made known. Before the foundation of the world, man and the redeemed church of Christ were in the thought of God. Christ, "in whom we have redemption" looked forward to His mission from eternity. "Creation, nature and redemption, are all parts of one system"; in the reconciliation of the cross all orders of beings are concerned. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." (V. 10)

(c) Prayer. 1: 15-23. A petition that the understanding of believers may be illuminated; that they may know the hope of their calling and the riches of their heritage which comes through unity with their risen and ascended Lord.

II. DOCTRINAL. UNITY IN CHRIST. Ch. 2-3.

(a) The calling of the Gentiles out of "trespasses and sins" and the power of Satan into a new life in Christ.

(b) Jew and Gentile are reconciled and brought together "in one body by the cross" "no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ through the Spirit. 2: 11-22.

(c) The mystery of the universal call was made known to Paul by a new revelation. Prayer for a more full comprehension of this unity in the love of Christ, by believers. 3: 1-21.

III. PRACTICAL. Ch. 4-6:17. THE NEW LIFE IN UNITY WITH CHRIST.

(a) Exhortation to walk worthily of this new life. The rise

"one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all." 4: 1-24.

(b) Exhortation to gain the victory over sin "in virtue of the sense of unity with man in Christ" and the assertion that no evil minded person "hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God." 4: 25-5: 21.

(c) Social duties. The regeneration and consecration, in the new life, of the relations of husbands and wives; children and parents; slaves and masters. 5: 22-6: 9.

(d) The battle against the powers of evil. Final entreaty that believers put "on the whole armour of God." 6: 10-17.

IV. CONCLUSION. 6: 18-24.

(a) Personal. Paul requests special prayer for himself in captivity. Tychicus is commended. 6: 18-22.

(b) Farewell and Blessing. 6: 23-24.

XLII.

PHILIPPIANS.

THE CITY OF PHILIPPI.

Philippi will be forever famous as the place in which the first church of Europe was organized by Paul in 52 A. D.

This city originally belonged to Thrace but in 358 B. C. it was seized by king Philip (father of Alexander the Great) of Macedon and made the most easterly city of his kingdom. It is conspicuous in Roman history as the place of the defeat (42 B. C.) of Brutus and Cassius by Octavius and Marcus Antonius: by which the cause of the republican oligarchy of Rome died and Augustus (Octavius) was made emperor. In commemoration of this decisive battle the city was given the rank of a Roman colony. It was not itself a center of manufacture or commerce but situated on the great Egnatian way travelers and traders passed through it eastward and westward from all parts of the Roman world. It was a fit city in which to begin that work of the cross which was to spread over and conquer all Europe.

THE CHURCH.

In the sixteenth chapter of the Acts there is a full and graphic account of the founding of the church of

Philippi upon the second missionary journey of the apostle. *The cause* of this beginning to give the Gospel to Europe was in the direct call of the Holy Spirit. Acts. 16 : 6-12. *The companions* of Paul at this time were Silas, Luke and Timothy. *The starting point* of the preaching was from a Jewish center, not in a synagogue but outside the city "by a river side where prayer was wont to be made." The Jewish influence, from the history, does not seem to have been very strong. Lydia, "a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira" was the first convert ; she opened her house for the bearers of the glad tidings. The first opposition came not from the Jews but from the masters of the girl out of whom Paul cast a spirit of divination : this led to the imprisonment of Paul and Silas (the conversion of the jailer and his household) and ended in their release and departure for Thessalonica. The work was unexpectedly interrupted but was by no means a failure. Persecution only served to attach the church more closely to Paul and the gospel which he preached. There is no full record of Paul's subsequent visits to Philippi. In Acts 20: 1 we find after the trouble at Ephesus Paul departed to go into Macedonia ; the tradition is that he stopped at this city and wrote the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians. We know (Acts 20: 6) that he sailed from Philippi on his last journey to Jerusalem. After his release from his first imprisonment at Rome Paul wrote to Timothy (1 Tim. 1: 3) about a visit to Macedonia during which he probably visited his beloved church.

THE EPISTLE.

The Place and Time of Writing. This letter was written from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment. Acts 28: 30-31. Philippians 1: 7-13; 4: 22. About 62 A. D.

The occasion of the Epistle is very plain. The church at Philippi had sent to Paul at Rome a gift by the hands of Epaphroditus: a contribution for his support while imprisoned and unable to earn money for himself. This was not the first time that this church had remembered the necessities of the apostle. 4: 10-19. Epaphroditus, while at Rome, had entered heartily into Christian work; had been taken sick; had recovered and was about to return home. Paul takes the opportunity offered to write this letter of thanks to his beloved Philippians. 2: 25-30.

Contents. The Epistle is valuable not only as showing how Paul could write a letter of thanks for favors received but for its picture of him in imprisonment; the account of the spread of the Gospel in Rome and the brief yet comprehensive statements of Christians' doctrines.

1. Paul in captivity shows a fine Christian resignation and a high state of spiritual joy. He is intensely anxious not about himself but that the cause of Christ may prosper. Ch. 1: 19-30; 4: 4.

2. The remarkable increase of Christianity in Rome mentioned in 1: 12-18 is confirmed by the "History of the Neronian persecution" (which took place about ten years after Paul's first imprisonment)

in Tacitus, where the Christians are spoken of as a "vast multitude."

3. The whole Christian creed, "the incarnation, passion and exaltation of Christ" is expressed in 2: 5-12.

4. In 3: 2-21 there is a clear exposition of true righteousness and Christian liberty. Righteousness can only be reached through Christ and not through the law.

5. The great end to be attained is likeness to Christ, unity with Christ. The doctrines, entreaties, warnings and exhortations of this Epistle are full of these thoughts.

ANALYSIS.

THIS EPISTLE IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS.

FIRST PART. Ch. 1: 1-3: 1.

INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-2: 4

(a) Greeting. 1: 1-2.

(b) Paul's thanksgiving, joy in the fellowship, and prayer for the Philippians. 1: 3-11.

(c) An account of the rapid spread of the Gospel in Rome and the apostle's rejoicing that Christ is preached. 1: 12-30.

(d) Exhortation to unity in Christ; lowliness of mind and firmness of purpose. 2: 1-4.

DOCTRINAL. 2: 5-12.

In this famous passage we have the Christian creed in brief form.

"The Godhead of Christ and His manhood—His Pre-existence and His Incarnation—His Passion and His Exaltation.

CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PART. 2: 13-3: 1.

(a) Renewed exhortation to an upright and blameless Christian life. 2: 13-14.

(b) The sending of Timothy and the return of Epaphroditus (their messenger) to the Philippians. Ch. 2: 19-30.

(c) Farewell message. Ch. 3: 1.

SECOND PART. 3: 2-4: 23.

This section seems to have been added after the letter had been finished.

WARNINGS.

First. Against the error of Judaic teaching. Paul could boast that he had been a good Jew and scrupulously kept the law yet he renounced all that he might win Christ. True righteousness can come only through faith in Christ. 3: 2-16.

Second. Against a false idea of the liberty of the Gospel (Antinomianism). Whereby men claiming to be Christians, walked in evil ways. 3: 17-21.

FINAL EXHORTATIONS. 4: 1-9.

To steadfastness, unity, joy and the following of all good in Christ.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GIFTS AND BENEDICTION. 4: 10-23.

XLIII.

COLOSSIANS.

THE CITY AND CHURCH OF COLOSSÆ.

The city of Colossæ, situated in a valley of Phrygia on the river Lycus, was, in Paul's time, of comparatively little importance. A few miles below it, on the same river, were two very prosperous cities: Hierapolis and Laodicea. In all these places there were Christian churches. We have no account of Paul visiting these cities or doing any work in them. 2: 1.

The Church. It is thought that Epaphras (1: 7), whose visit to Rome was the occasion of this epistle, founded the church at Colossæ. Whether he came to consult Paul about the state of the church, or some other errand brought him is not known; at any rate what he told the apostle about the serious errors of doctrine that were finding entrance into the Christian fold filled Paul's heart with great anxiety and caused him to write this letter. Col. 1: 7; 4: 12.

THE EPISTLE.

Place and Time of Writing. This letter was written in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment about 63 A. D. Acts 28: 30; Col. 1: 7; 4: 7-9-18.

Contents. The chief thought is: "The dignity

and sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ as the mediator and head of all creation and of the church." 1: 14-16-17-18. Special emphasis is laid upon "The Headship of Christ" because of the false teachers that had appeared in Colossæ and were confusing the minds of the Christian converts. The starting point of the error or heresy which they taught was in the old oriental dogma that matter is evil and the source of evil. As God is pure and good, God and matter must be antagonistic; the world could not have come directly from God. To bridge this chasm a whole crowd or chain of intermediate beings (the first coming from God) were conceived to exist between God and matter or the world, "till at last the intangible and infinite was confined and curdled into actual matter, and the pure was darkened into evil." This teaching played havoc with the simplest moral precepts, for if matter is evil and the source of evil, man's sin is not to be found in his will but in his body. United with these ideas were the narrowest conceptions of Jewish ceremonialism, insistence on circumcision, fast days, etc. The doctrine of intermediate beings between God and matter was devised and imparted by the Gnostic teachers to save God from being the author of evil. Redemption from sin, if matter is evil can come only through asceticism, hence the upholding of ceremonialism.

To these ideas Paul ("an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God") opposed the true doctrine, that Christ is the only link between God and the universe, "by Him were all things created (1: 16) that are in

heaven and that are in earth." He is also the head of the church. 1: 18. Christ is the only mediator. 1: 13-14. "He is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh"; so that our material bodies are not the source of evil. There is no place for ascetic mortification. Evil is in our willingness or unwillingness to live the life in Christ. In Christ we are dead to sin and risen with Him to a life of holiness. 2: 20-23; 3: 1-4. Paul warns against asceticism and the worship of angels (instead of Christ). 2: 1-19.

Modern Application of this Teaching. There are two errors in our day which perpetuate these old heresies. 1. The error of the speculative thinker, which fills the world with forces that leave no room for the working of a personal will. 2. The error of the ceremonialist, which makes religion mainly a matter of ritual.

The Christ whom the world needs to have proclaimed is not only the perfect man, great teacher and meek sufferer, but the source of creation and its Lord, "who from the beginning has been the life of all that has lived and before the beginning was in the bosom of the Father." He alone can forgive sin and reconcile men to God. 1: 14.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-12.

(a) Salutation. 1: 1-2. Paul salutes the church of Colossae as "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God."

(b) Thanksgiving for their faith and prayer for their increase in grace and knowledge of the will of Christ. 1: 3-12.

II. DOCTRINAL. "THE SOLE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST." 1: 13-3: 4.

(a) Christ the mediator. "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." 1:13-14.

(b) Image of the invisible God, Creator and Preserver of all things. 1:15-17.

(c) Head of the church. Reconciliation only through Him. 1:18-20.

(d) The Colossians were reconciled to God through the mediation of Christ. 1:21-29.

(e) The earnest desire of Paul that the church of Colossæ should remain rooted in the faith which it had been taught. 2:1-7.

(f) Warning against wrong speculation; lest any man "through false philosophy or vain deceit" obscure or cause the Colossians to deny the true Godhead of Christ. 2:8-15.

(g) Renewed warning against errors in worship. Jewish observances, ordinances and asceticisms; the adoration of angels. 2:16-19.

(h) The dead and the risen Christ. In Christ we are dead to the rudiments of the world and risen into communion with God in Christ. The affections are set on things above. 2:20-3:4.

III. PRACTICAL. 3:5-4:6.

(a) Exhortations: to cast out all the sins of the unregenerate nature; to put on the new man in Christ. Then there will be no difference between Greek or Jew, Barbarian or Scythian, bond or free "but Christ all and in all." 4:10-17.

(b) Special, family and social duties. 3:18-4:1.

Husbands and wives; children and parents; servants and masters. All duties are to be performed as in the sight of Christ.

(c) Renewed exhortation to prayer and watchfulness. 4:2-6.

IV. CONCLUSION. 4:7-18.

(a) The "mission of Tychicus and Onesimus"; the greetings of the companions of Paul; the expressed desire that the churches of Colossæ and Laodicea exchange and read Paul's epistles. 4:7-17.

(b) The salutation. 4:18.

XLIV.

I AND II THESSALONIANS.

THE CITY OF THESSALONICA.

Thessalonica was situated at the head of the Thermaic gulf. It was founded by Cassander, king of Macedon, in 315 B. C. and named after his wife. It came under Roman rule in 168 B. C. and in 42 B. C. was declared a "free Roman city." In Paul's time it was a great commercial centre; the inhabitants were Greeks, Romans and Jews. It is one of the few ancient cities that has retained its importance up to the present time. The population now numbers over 70,000. The modern name is Saloniki.

THE CHURCH.

When Paul, on his second missionary journey, left Philippi he went westward along the great Egnatian road a hundred miles, until he came to Thessalonica. Here he found the Jews sufficiently numerous and influential to possess a synagogue. Acts 16 and 17: 1-10. Gathered about every synagogue, there was usually a company of devout and intelligent Gentiles who, tired of idolatry and its practices, were seeking a purer religion. Such, Paul thought, would gladly receive the Gospel even if the Jews did not. The apostle preached three Sabbath days

in the synagogue and begun a work which has lasted to the present time. But the "Jews which believed not" made a tumult and Paul departed to Berea; from this city he went to Athens; thence to Corinth where he spent eighteen months. On his third missionary journey the apostle again, in all probability, visited this church when he came into Macedonia. Acts 20: 1-4. Two of its members, Aristarchus and Secundus, accompanied him when he returned to Asia. One of these, Aristarchus, shared his imprisonment at Rome. Col. 4: 10.

THE EPISTLES.

These letters are specially interesting and important as the earliest extant writings of Paul and probably of the New Testament.

Time and Place. They were written about 53 A. D. from Corinth. The second epistle was written within a few months after the first.

Occasion of Writing. Paul had left Thessalonica very unwillingly, and greatly desired to return. 1: 17-18. He made two attempts to revisit the church but was hindered from doing so. When he reached Athens he grew very anxious about his converts and sent Timothy back to see how they prospered. 3: 1-6. Upon his return he was comforted and gladdened by the report he brought. They were standing fast in the Lord; they were enduring persecution; they were devoted to the faith of Christ. What the apostle heard from Timothy increased his desire

to visit the church (3: 11) but as he could not leave Corinth he writes these loving and fatherly letters.

Contents. The epistles show that this young church had made a good record for the short time it had been in existence. Nothing could be more revolutionary in those days than to become a Christian. Paul is quick to see and praise the faith of the Thessalonians. But he also perceives their moral, social and doctrinal deficiencies which he corrects, and at the same time instructs them more fully in the faith in Christ. The first three chapters of the first epistle are of a personal character; Paul reminds them of the fact that he had preached the Gospel to them and of the way in which they received it; he speaks of his conduct and his companions while with them, and his great anxiety and love for them since he left the city. The two remaining chapters are occupied with moral, doctrinal and practical matters. Paul urges upon them the necessity of personal purity, brotherly love and independence in working with their own hands. The Thessalonians were greatly troubled lest those who had died since they became Christians should not see the Lord at His second coming which they believed near at hand. Paul explains (3: 13-5: 5) the manner of the Advent and bids them not to be troubled in regard to those who have died, or the time when Christ should come; he exhorts to watchfulness. He closes this letter by urging a more devout trust in Christ and attention to practical matters of church life. The second epistle is principally taken up with a

fuller explanation of the second coming of Christ and what must take place before that day. The church had evidently misunderstood Paul's first letter in regard to the time; he here takes occasion to utter a solemn warning against thinking the coming of Christ near at hand. 2: 1-2.

TEACHING.

1. Divinity of Christ. "Paul speaks of Jesus as 'the Lord,' 'our Lord' about twenty-five times" in the first epistle. "The resurrection and the life." 4: 14-18. "Medium of Salvation." 5: 9. Dying for us and "giving us life through His death." 5: 10, etc. These passages are very important as showing in (probably) the first written Christian New Testament document that Jesus was held to be Divine from the beginning. The second Advent which was thought to be close at hand only emphasizes this doctrine.

2. Purity, industry and brotherly love. Paul urges personal purity; impurity was the most common vice of the heathen; a pure soul cannot dwell in an impure body. Industry, working for one's living; this where slave labor was so common was considered a disgrace; the apostle here forever dignifies labor. Brotherly love, a new bond by which men were to be brought together in Christ. 1 Thess. 4: 1-12.

ANALYSIS. I AND II THESSALONIANS.

I THESSALONIANS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-10.

(a) Personal address and salutation. 1: 1-2.

(b) Thanksgiving; *a.* For their faith, love and hope in Jesus Christ. *b.* Their conversion and turning from idols to serve the living and true God. 1: 3-10.

II. NARRATIVE. 2: 1-4; 12.

(a) How the gospel was given to the Thessalonians by Paul and his companions. The conduct of the apostles. 2: 1-12.

(b) How the gospel was received. 2: 13-16.

(c) An account of Paul's care and anxiety for the church since leaving it. 2: 17-3: 10.

(d) Prayer of Paul for their establishment in the faith of Jesus Christ. 3: 11-13.

(e) Exhortation; to abstain, as followers of Christ, from impurity and fraud; to follow after holiness and brotherly love. 4: 1-12.

III. DOCTRINAL. THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST. 4: 13-5: 11.

(a) The parts which the dead and the living will have when Christ shall come again. [The Thessalonians thought the second advent to be near at hand and were troubled about those that had died, lest they should not see it.] 4: 13-18.

(b) The uncertainty of the time. The need of constant watchfulness that all may be ready when the Lord shall come. 5: 1-11.

IV. PRACTICAL. 5: 12-24.

(a) Rules for the conduct of the church in regard to its overseers and of its members. 5: 12-15.

(b) Exhortation to be joyful, prayerful and thankful. 5: 16-22.

(c) Closing prayer that they be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. 5: 23-25.

(d) Greeting and benediction. 5: 26-28.

II THESSALONIANS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-4.

(a) Salutation. 1: 1-2.

(b) Thanksgiving for the growth of faith in the Thessalonian church. 1: 3-4.

II. DOCTRINAL. THE GREAT DAY OF THE LORD. 1: 5-2: 17.

As the Thessalonians seem to have misunderstood Paul's first letter, he in this epistle explains more fully the second Advent.

(a) When Christ shall come again, it will be a day of terrible retribution for the unbeliever, but a day of glory for all who trust in Him. 1: 5-12.

(b) A warning not to think the time near at hand. 2: 1-2.

(c) Things that must come to pass before that "Great Day": "a falling away"; a "man of sin"; "the son of perdition" and his exaltation; "signs and lying wonders"; terrible fate of the apostates. 2: 3-12.

(d) Thanksgiving that the Thessalonians "have been chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit" "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2: 13-17.

III. CONCLUSION. 3.

(a) Paul requests prayer for himself that "the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified" with him; he also desires that the Lord may direct their "hearts into the love of God and the patient waiting for Christ." 3: 1-5.

(b) Paul gives command that discipline be enforced upon the disorderly; that every man earn his own living. 3: 6-12.

(c) Exhortation to be not weary in well doing. 3: 13-15.

(d) Salutation and benediction. 3: 16-18.

XLV.

I AND II TIMOTHY AND TITUS.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

I and II Timothy and Titus are so named because they treat principally of the duties and right exercise of the pastoral office. They are grouped together on account of their marked similarity of thought and style. They add not a little to what we know of Paul's life and finish a history which would have otherwise been incomplete.

CONTENTS.

Teaching. Paul touches upon many practical subjects which are of importance to the churches. The Gospel is applied to the outward conduct. Great stress is laid upon the character of church officers. 1 Tim. 3: 1-13; Titus 1: 7-16. Timothy and Titus are directed how they should bear themselves towards the church members and what they should teach. 1 Tim. 5; Titus 2. Instruction is given in regard to public worship and persons for whom prayer should be offered (1 Tim. 2); also the conduct of the church in the presence of the heathen world and its magistrates. Titus 3. Timothy is shown that a diligent study of the Scriptures and fervent preaching of the

Word form a most effective bulwark against all forms of evil. 2 Tim. 3: 13-4: 5.

The church organization was quite simple: Bishops, Elders and Deacons are the names mentioned as officers. 1 Tim. 3: 1-13; Titus 1: 5-7. Deacons and their office are first mentioned in Acts 6: 1-6. The name Elder is taken from the Jewish synagogue. Luke 7: 3. The terms Bishop, Elder, Overseer and Presbyter were interchangeable in the apostolic age and applied to the same office; they are nowhere named as distinct from each other. Elders were ordained by Paul and Barnabas in every church (Acts 14: 23); they held a spiritual and administrative office. Acts 20: 28. The apostles formed a class by themselves. Acts 11: 30; 15: 2. Reference is made in 1 Tim. 4: 14 to a council of Presbyters who ordained Timothy to the work of an evangelist. There was a plurality of Presbyters in each church.

THE TIME.

It is quite generally conceded that Paul was freed from his first imprisonment (Acts 28:30) in the year 64 A. D. Then followed two more years of missionary service. It was during this time that the first epistle to Timothy and that to Titus were written. The second epistle to Timothy was written during the second imprisonment and not far from the time of the martyrdom of Paul. 2 Tim. 4: 6-21. From the record in these letters we can trace some of the movements of the Apostle during the time of his freedom. His release was not

unexpected for we find him writing to the Philippians (2: 24) and to Philemon (1: 22) that he trusted that he would soon be able to come to them. Immediately after his prison doors were opened he went to Ephesus; leaving Timothy there (1 Tim. 1: 3) he departed for Macedonia. From some place in Macedonia or Greece he took ship for the large island of Crete where he left Titus (1: 5) intending himself to spend the winter in Nicopolis. Titus 3: 12. In 2 Timothy, we find Paul again at Rome; he speaks here of having been at Corinth and Miletus (4: 20). From the way he mentions Troas (4: 13) it is thought that he was arrested there and taken to Rome; his second imprisonment and death.

TIMOTHY.

This disciple of Paul was a native of the province of Lycaonia; probably of the city of Lystra. Acts 16: 1. His father was a Greek but his mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, were devout Jewesses. 2 Tim. 1: 5. He was taught to study the Scriptures from a child. 2 Tim. 3: 15.

It is thought that he was converted to Christ during the first visit of Paul to Lystra. Acts 14. Some time after this he was ordained to do the work of an evangelist. 1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6; 4: 15. From the time of Paul's second visit to Lystra (Acts 16: 1) Timothy was with him almost constantly until the time of his martyrdom. The Gentile Apostle esteemed his young disciple very highly; he sent him on several important missions and associated his

name with his own in writing to a number of the churches. Acts 17:14; 18:5; 1 Thess. 1:1; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor. 1:1; Rom. 16:21; Acts 20:4; Col. 1:1; Philem. 1:1; Phil. 1:1.

It was while Timothy was in charge of the church at Ephesus, after Paul's release from his first imprisonment, that he received the two epistles called by his name. 1 Tim. 1:3. During his second imprisonment and when near to death Paul writes for his loved disciple to come to him quickly. 2 Tim. 4:9; 13:21.

TITUS.

Little is known about this disciple; the Scripture notices are few: Gal. 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:12-13; 7:5-16. He was a Gentile and was taken by Paul to Jerusalem where he became a test case of the freedom of the Gospel and was not compelled to be circumcised. He was the messenger by whom Paul sent the first and second letters to the Corinthians. It is evident from the narrative that he was an energetic and capable missionary. He was left in the island of Crete to finish a work which Paul had begun after his release from his first imprisonment. Titus 1:5. It was during Titus' stay here that the Apostle wrote him the letter called by his name. This epistle counseled Titus as to: 1st. The qualifications of the presbyters; 2nd. The tone to be adopted towards the heretical teachers; and 3rd. The points to be insisted upon in his instructions to church members generally. When he was sent for he was to join the Apostle at Nicopolis. 3:12

ANALYSIS I AND II TIMOTHY AND TITUS.

I TIMOTHY.

I. GREETING. 1:1-2.

II. THE TRUE TEACHING OF THE GOSPEL. Ch. 1.

Timothy is warned against false teachers and reminded of the aim and end of the life in Christ.

III. THE ORDER AND REGULATION OF PUBLIC WORSHIP. Ch. 2.

(a) Prayer for those in authority and for all men. 2:1-4.

(b) Instruction: "There is one God and one Mediator (Christ) between God and men." 2:5-7.

(c) Conduct of men and women in the church assemblies. 2:8-15.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CHURCH OFFICERS. Ch. 3.

(a) The ideal bishop or minister. 3:1-7.

(b) The ideal deacon and the ministering women. 3:8-13.

(c) Conclusion of chapter. Paul declares his intention to visit Timothy. An ascription of praise. 3:14-16.

V. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY. Ch. 4-6.

In these three chapters Timothy is charged by Paul to keep before him a high view of the church and its grand destiny. "It is the pillar on which the mystery of salvation is inscribed that all may read."

(a) Timothy, as a teacher, is reminded of his commission to put the church on guard against errors of doctrine and life. Ch. 4.

(b) Timothy is shown how he should bear rule and conduct himself towards the elders and women of his congregation. Paul adds instructions in regard to a man's care for his family; support of the ministry; discipline of offenders, etc. Ch. 5.

(c) Relation of masters and servants. Right attitude of believers in Christ toward riches. The chief thing: "to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness," and to "fight the good fight of faith." 6:1-19.

(d) Closing charge to Timothy with benediction. 6:20-21.

II TIMOTHY.

I. GREETING AND THANKSGIVING. 1:1-5.

II. THE CHRISTIAN CONDUCT OF TIMOTHY. 1:5-2:14.

Paul exhorts Timothy not to allow himself to be daunted by fear of opposition or suffering, in doing his work for Christ.

1:6-7. He encourages him by

(a) The great revelation and power of the Gospel. 1:8-10.

(b) His own work. 1:11-18.

(c) The sure hope of a great reward. "If we suffer we shall also reign with Him." 2:1-14.

III. TIMOTHY AS A PREACHER OF THE WORD. 2:15-4:5.

Paul exhorts Timothy:

(a) To study to show himself a workman "approved unto God" and to shun vain questions. "For the foundation of God standeth sure." 2:15-26.

(b) In the perilous times that are coming, to feed on the Word of God and preach it in season and out of season." 3:1-17; 4:1-5.

IV. LAST WORDS OF PAUL. 4:6-22.

The Apostle now turns to himself and speaks of his coming martyrdom. He is ready to be offered; he has "fought a good fight." He beseeches Timothy to come and see him and bring Mark. He refers to the first hearing of his case when everyone left him alone. After various messages he closes with the usual benediction.

TITUS.

I. GREETING AND SUBJECT OF THE EPISTLE. 1:1-5.

Titus is left in Crete to do a special work for Paul in his absence, (1:5) after which he is to join the apostle at Nicopolis 3:12.

II. THE KIND OF OFFICERS TO BE APPOINTED IN THE CRETAN CHURCHES. Ch. 1.

Special moral and spiritual fitness is set forth as necessary in view of the peculiar character of the Cretans and certain forms of doctrinal error.

III. THE INSTRUCTION TO BE GIVEN TO THE CRETANS. Ch. 2:1-15-3:11.

- (a) "The things which become sound doctrine." 2:1.
- (b) Practical teaching for the proper regulation of the conduct of all classes. 2:2-10.
- (c) The foundation of the instruction rests upon Christ. 2:11-15.
- (d) Proper attitude of the Christian community toward the Pagan world; magistrates and those who have not yet believed in Christ. Kindness and gentleness and "the avoidance of foolish questions best reveal the spirit of Christ by those who profess his name. 3:1-11.

Parting requests and benediction. 3:12-15.

XLVI.

PHILEMON.

THE EPISTLE.

This is the only strictly private letter of Paul which we have. All the other epistles are either church or pastoral letters of "authoritative direction." He here does not assume his apostolic dignity but speaks as a Christian to a Christian brother.

The time of writing and the date are the same as the epistle to the church at Colossæ. Col. 4:9.

Persons. Philemon was evidently a convert of Paul (1:19) and a well-known and influential Christian for the church met in his house. 1:2. Apphia is supposed to have been the wife of Philemon and Archippus, a minister of the church. Onesimus was a slave of Philemon who had committed some wrong and fled to Rome. 1:18.

CONTENTS.

In this story of the intercession of Paul for a slave we have a picture of the Apostle's kindness of heart which we should be sorry to miss. But there is something more than this. A great principle is set forth and maintained. Slavery was at its height and its worst estate; the vices and evils engendered by it

were sapping the life of the Empire. Shortly before Paul's arrival in Rome, Senator Pedanius Secundus, a prefect of the city had been murdered by a slave, and in consequence, under the Silanian law, all his slaves, 400 in number, were put to death.

Nothing can be more clear than that Christianity was, and is, radically opposed to slavery for its fundamental principle is "brotherhood." It set itself to redress all grievances by "exalting the humble, glorifying weakness, and restraining the self-assertion of strength"; above all it linked each individual soul with Christ and thus gave to every life a divine sacredness. There were two ways of putting this principle in action. 1. By law; placing slavery in the category of moral evils and proclaiming its abrogation. 2. By the Spirit; setting forth the great truths of the brotherhood of man, the sonship of Christ, the fatherhood of God. To have taken the former way would have brought on at once a servile war. Paul took the latter course and carried out what he had proclaimed in 1 Cor. 7:20-24, that every man should remain in the outward condition in which he was called and begin there to live the Christian life, living with Christ in a new spiritual unity. The apostle set himself to the task of raising the self respect of the slave, and causing the master to recognize his responsibility in Christ and see in the slave a brother beloved; as soon as the master did this slavery disappeared. Onesimus was sent back to Philemon not "as a servant but above a servant, a brother beloved." This spirit and principle have en-

tered so thoroughly into the life of Christian nations that this awful institution of human slavery is now a thing of the past.

ANALYSIS.

I. SALUTATION. 1: 1-3.

II. THANESGIVING. 1: 4-7.

III. STATEMENT OF THE OBJECT OF THE LETTER. 1: 8-21.

As a favor for love's sake Philemon is asked to receive back Onesimus no longer a runaway slave but Paul's spiritual child. Emphasis is laid upon the fact that he is now a Christian brother and should be received as such. Paul requests that he may be held to account for any wrong done by this erring man before he left Colossæ. 1: 8-21.

IV. CONCLUSION. 1: 22-25.

(a) In expectation of a speedy release from imprisonment the apostle asks that a lodging be secured for him. 1: 22.

(b) Salutation and benediction. 1: 23-25.

XLVII.

HEBREWS.

THE HEBREWS.

They were evidently Jewish Christians in danger of apostacy but no particular church to which they belong is mentioned. The peril in which they stood arose from several sources. 1. A tendency to unbelief in Christ (3: 12) and to doubt His claims. 2. The influence of the elaborate ritual of the temple services; the worship of the Christian churches was very simple. 3. The taunts of the Jews that they were renegades and traitors to the law; they would be asked how they could turn their backs upon a law given by prophets and angels and a sanctuary ministered to by priests called of God. 4. They were subject to persecution.

The whole carefully sustained argument in the epistle is to meet all these objections, fairly and respectfully and to show once for all the supremacy of Christ over prophets, angels, Moses and the old covenant; in fact the superiority of Christianity to Judaism in every particular. "The law is shown to be the divinely appointed preparation for the gospel"; the law made nothing perfect, it was the shadow and symbol, of which the reality is Christ. In the

eleventh and twelfth chapters there is a magnificent showing of the faith of the Old Testament worthies who believed in God and who walked by faith and not by sight. The Jewish Christians are earnestly exhorted to an imitation of this faith in their trials. Christ who has passed into the heavens is their high priest, above all high priests, the Son of God, the Heir of all things and ready to save them with an everlasting salvation.

THE EPISTLE.

The author says nothing about his name or place in the church. The letter has been ascribed to Paul and a number of writers; the arguments on this question which are too lengthy to find a place here may be found in any one of the larger commentaries.

The time of writing was undoubtedly before the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D.; the temple is referred to as still in existence and the sacrifices as being offered. 9: 6-7; 10: 1.

The authenticity of the book stands unquestioned.

ANALYSIS.

SUBJECT: THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN OVER THE JEWISH DISPENSATION.

FIRST SECTION, DOCTRINAL. Ch. 1-10: 18.

"The gospel is God's full and final revelation of Himself to man."

I. CHRIST SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS. 1: 1-3.

"Heir of all things," Creator of the world, "The express image of God's person."

II. CHRIST SUPERIOR TO ANGELS. 1: 4-2: 18.

The Jews held that the law had been given through angels.
2: 2.

(a) He is shown to be higher than the angels by His Divine nature; He is the Son and the angels worship Him. 1: 4-14.

(b) This supremacy is heightened by "his voluntary and temporary humiliation" by which He was better fitted to accomplish His work as our Savior. 2: 1-18.

III. CHRIST SUPERIOR TO MOSES. Ch. 3-4.

(a) Moses was a faithful servant, but Christ is the Son. Christ is above Moses both in nature and office. The builder of the house "hath more honor than the house." 3: 1-6. An earnest exhortation to follow the Son. 3: 7-19.

(b) Christ alone can lead His people into true rest. The Israelites could not find rest under Joshua (4: 8) though he led them into the land of Canaan where they expected to find it. Warning lest we miss the promised rest in Christ. 4: 1-16.

IV. CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST SUPERIOR TO THE AARONIC HIGH PRIESTS. Ch. 5-7.

(a) Christ has not only the qualifications of the earthly high priest but in addition He is the Son of God and a priest after the order of Melchizedec. 5: 1-14. In the 6th chapter the writer interrupts his argument to exhort his hearers to follow the larger Christ and clearer revelation of God.

(b) The order of Melchizedec, after which Christ was made a priest is superior to that of Aaron. It is everlasting and not to be set aside: Abraham (and virtually Levi) paid tithes to Melchizedec; the Aaronic priests die but the priesthood of Melchizedec is a type of the eternal priesthood. Jesus is made the surety of a higher and better testament than that of Aaron; He has an eternal and unchangeable priesthood and is able to save "unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Jesus is our high priest, holy, blameless, "made higher than the heavens." Ch. 7.

V. SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT IN CHRIST TO THE OLD COVENANT. Ch. 8-10: 18.

(a) Christ is the high priest of a new and better covenant. He is set at the "right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"; a minister of the sanctuary of God, not man. Since a new covenant is made the old must pass away; this was predicted by the prophet Jeremiah. 31: 31-34. Hebrews Ch. 8.

(b) The new covenant is better than the old: (1) In place; the old was on earth, its rites and ceremonies in a sanctuary made with hands, the new is established in "a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands." (2) In time; in the old temple the high priest went alone into the most holy place only once a year; in the new, Christ has entered it once for all. (3) In Sacrifices; upon the old altar the blood of bulls and goats was shed continuously to purify and sanctify the unclean; in the new dispensation the blood of Christ is efficacious to cleanse from all sin although poured out but once on the cross. Again, through His blood (doing away with sacrifices) we have eternal redemption. Ch. 9. In Ch. 10: 1-18 the statement is made that the sacrifices of bulls and goats could not make men perfect or take away sins, and that we can be purified and sanctified only through the one perfect sacrifice of the body of Christ.

SECOND SECTION. Ch. 10: 19-13: 25.

I. REASONS FOR STEADFASTNESS IN THE FAITH OF CHRIST. Ch. 10: 19-39.

(a) We enter into the holiest place by the blood of Christ through a new and living way. Ch. 10: 19-20.

(b) We have a high priest not over an earthly tabernacle but over the eternal house of God. Ch. 10: 21-22. The remainder of the tenth chapter is devoted to exhortations and warnings.

II. THE NATURE, EFFICACY AND DUTY OF FAITH. Ch. 11-12.

The Jewish Christians, while professing faith in Christ, were clinging to the Temple and its services: the purpose of this chapter is to show them that they ought to walk only by faith in Christ. The example of Abraham and of other Old Testa-

ment worthies is cited to show that they were willing to let go the seen and temporal in order to take hold upon the unseen and eternal.

(a) Definition and utility of faith. 11: 1-3.

(b) Examples of faith. 11: 4-40.

(c) Exhortations to patience in faith; to endure chastening; to follow peace; above all to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. 12: 1-17.

(d) Comparison between the law given on Mt. Sinai and that of Mt. Zion. The revelation of the former earthly, showing the terrible side of God's nature; the latter spiritual, setting forth the greatness of the love of God. Warning against the rejection of this love. 12: 18-29.

III. CONCLUSION. Ch. 13.

(a) The duties and privileges of believers in Christ. 13: 1-6.

(b) Warnings; not to be carried away with strange doctrine, and to remember the superiority of the New to the Old Covenant. 13: 9-16.

(c) Last words, messages and benediction. 13: 17-25.

XLVIII.

JAMES.

THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

The Epistle of James is the first of the seven general letters which follow the epistles of Paul. They are called Catholic in the sense of being circular letters and intended for more than one church. They represent different modes of apprehending our Lord and His work and of building up the Christian faith.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

Contents. "It is a gospel of good works, of steadfastness and patience." Faith without works is declared to be useless. Stress is laid upon character rather than doctrine. James is earnest, practical and in parts stern in rebuking the evils of his times. The book has been compared to the Sermon on the Mount. Yet notwithstanding the absence of doctrinal teaching there is perfect loyalty to Christian truth. There is no mention of Jewish ordinances. The references to Christ are very marked: His equality with God, 1: 1, the new birth, 1: 18, His authority, 5: 10, glory, 2: 1, coming to Judgment, 5: 7. The rule of life is the Gospel law of liberty. 2: 12.

There are warnings against a barren faith, uncharitable judgment and undue respect for the rich.

There are striking definitions of pure religion, (1: 27) and true wisdom (3: 17).

Place, Date and Occasion. James would naturally write from Jerusalem, the place where he lived and held office in the church. The absence of any reference to the Gentiles inclines many critics to think that this epistle was amongst the earlier writings of the New Testament. The immediate cause of writing seems to have been to correct a misapprehension that faith and faith alone was necessary to salvation. Our Lord had to set the Jews right on this point in regard to Abraham. John 8: 39. The letter is a general one addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. There were thousands of Jews (Acts 21: 20) who believed in Christ, not only in Jerusalem but in the cities and towns throughout the world.

The author is James the brother of the Lord. The names of the brothers of the Lord were James, Joses Simon and Judas. Matt. 13: 55. They were with Jesus at Capernaum (John 2: 12) but did not believe on Him (John 7: 2-9; Mark 3: 21 and 31) until after His resurrection and ascension. Acts 1: 13-14. James occupied an important place as the head of the church at Jerusalem; he made a conciliatory speech at the Apostolic Council (Acts 15: 13-21); the last mention made of him in the Acts is when he and the elders of the mother church gave Paul a reception at the close of his third missionary journey Acts 21: 18-25. (Other Scripture references in regard to James are as follows: Gal. 1: 19; Acts 12: 17; Gal. 2: 9-12.) Josephus tells us in his history that

James was stoned to death in 62 A. D. on the charge of departing from the Jewish Law.

ANALYSIS.

Greeting; to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.

1: 1. "From James a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

I. ENDURANCE OF TRIALS. 1: 2-27.

(a) Trials and temptations should be born with joy: they try our faith but result in patience. The wisdom to use them in the right way is obtained by prayer. Afflictions come alike upon rich and poor but great blessing is the reward of endurance. Temptations do not come from God but from a man's own lusts: every good gift is from the Lord. 1: 2-18.

(b) Practical rules: In speech, "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." To lay aside all evil and receive the word of God. To be a doer and not a hearer of the word only. To bridle the tongue and follow after pure religion. 1: 19-27.

II. FAITH AND WORKS. Ch. 2.

(a) Rebuke of those who profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and yet have respect and servility towards the rich and despise the poor. 2: 1-13.

(b) Faith is useless without works; "idle professions without deeds of mercy can profit no man." 2: 14-26.

III. TRUE WISDOM. Ch. 3.

(a) Sins of the tongue; the terrible damage often caused by this little member of the body; the necessity for care in what we say. 3: 1-16.

(b) "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle." 3: 16-17.

IV. CAUSE, SOURCE AND REMEDY OF EVIL. Ch. 4.

(a) The cause and source of sin are in fleshly pleasures and violence. Men love the world and things in it more than God. 4: 1-6.

(b) The remedy is found in submission to God; resisting the devil, cleansing the heart, drawing near to the Lord and remembrance of the uncertainty of life. 4: 7-17.

V. WARNINGS AND EXHORTATIONS. Ch. 5.

(a) Rebuke of the rich who oppress the poor; dire calamities will surely be visited upon them. 5: 1-6.

(b) Comforting words for the afflicted and down-trodden. The Lord will come and help His people; the blessedness of those who endure and have patience in His name. 5: 7-11.

(c) Various directions: the evil of needless oaths; trials are to be met with prayer; a merry heart is to make known its thanksgiving in singing psalms; the sick are to have prayer offered for them by the elders of the church; the erring brother is to be reclaimed. 5: 12-20.

XLIX.

I AND II PETER.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

This epistle is one of the best authenticated books in the New Testament.

Contents. It is evident that this letter was written to Christians who were passing through a period of trial and suffering for their religion. They had been falsely accused as evil doers. 2: 12; 3: 16; 4: 4. As they stood defenseless they needed to be taught the lessons of hope and resignation. Peter advised them how to bear evil for Christ's sake; he reminds them how their Lord being reviled, reviled not again; he shows that their deliverance is to come through un murmuring patience and continuance in well doing. 2: 19-25. The whole of the fourth chapter is devoted to the subject of living a blameless Christian life under unmerited suffering. Why should they not so live? for they were "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," "heirs of salvation, redeemed with the precious blood of Christ."

Loyalty to Christ. Peter makes everything hinge upon the cross (1: 18-19; 2: 24; 3: 18); the sufferings (2: 21; 3: 18; 4: 13); resurrection (1: 3); manifestation (1: 7 and 13); and exaltation of Christ (3: 22; 4: 11;

5: 10). He calls Christ a living stone (2: 4-8); advocates submission to the lawfully constituted authorities (2: 13-16, compare Matt. 16: 24-27); preaches a large forgiveness (4: 8, compare Matt. 18: 22); and humility (5: 5, compare John, 13: 1-6); as he had been taught by the Lord.

Place of Writing, Date and Author. Babylon (5: 13) since the captivity had contained a large Jewish population and it is from this city that the letter professes to be written. By some critics the view has been advocated that Babylon is a mystical name for Rome and that the letter was really written from the latter city. There has been a great deal of discussion on the point whether Peter was ever in Rome or not; the question is still an open one. The last appearances of Peter in the Scriptures are at the council in Jerusalem (Acts 25: 7-11) and again at Antioch (2: 11-14). In the absence of complete proof in regard to Peter's being in Rome many critics take the statement given in the letter that it was written at Babylon. The date, for a number of reasons, is placed before the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D. The author is Peter the apostle, who wrote it to the Christians in the churches of Asia Minor.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

The occasion of this letter was a new danger to the churches. False teachers had entered them and were doing great harm.

The object of the writer was "to promote the steadfastness of the Christians by warning them of danger

which threatened faith and practice and to urge them to seek a fuller knowledge of God and Jesus Christ." 3: 1-2; 1: 1-2. They were shown how they could recognize the teachers of evil (Ch. 2) and the falsity of what they taught (Ch. 3). See the analysis.

The writer of this letter claims to be Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ (1: 1) and that this is the second epistle from his hand (3: 1). He tells us that he was "a companion of the Lord and an eye witness of his majesty." 1: 16.

Authenticity. This book was not admitted into the canon of the New Testament Scriptures until quite late, but in style, thought and purpose it is admitted to be worthy of the great apostle.

ANALYSIS. I AND II PETER.

I PETER.

I. GREETING FROM "PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." Ch. 1: 1-2.

II. THANKSGIVING FOR THE BLESSINGS OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. Ch. 1: 3-12.

The joy that comes from this salvation more than compensates for any sufferings endured for Christ's sake.

III. CHRISTIAN CONDUCT BEFORE GOD. 1: 13-2: 10.

(a) Believers should gird up their loins and be "as obedient children," remembering that they have been redeemed not "with corruptible things" but with "the precious blood of Christ." 1: 13-25.

(b) Followers of Jesus ought to lay "aside all malice and all guile"; desiring to know the Word that they may grow and remembering that they are a "chosen generation" and a "royal priesthood." 2: 1-10.

IV. CHRISTIAN CONDUCT IN THE WORLD. 2: 11-4: 19.

- (a) A blameless life and conversation. 2: 11-12.
- (b) Submission to the properly constituted authorities, 2: 13-18.
- (c) Submission to unmerited suffering and wrong for Christ's sake, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not." He, the righteous one, bore "our sins in his own body on the tree." 2: 19-25.
- (d) Family and social relations. Ch. 3.
- (e) Directions how to live upright lives under ill treatment and in the face of the active enmity of a hostile world. Ch. 4.

V. ADVICE TO PARTICULAR CLASSES. Ch. 5.

To the elder and younger members of the flock. Right teaching; proper subjection; sobriety; watchfulness; faithfulness. Promise of God's grace through Jesus Christ. Doxology.

II PETER.

GREETING. 1: 1-2.

I. EXHORTATIONS TO PROGRESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. Ch. 1.

- (a) To attain to a better and more perfect knowledge of God and Jesus Christ. 1: 3-4.
- (b) To add to "faith, virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." 1: 5-7.
- (c) To avoid barrenness and unfruitfulness in order to gain an entrance "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 1: 8-11.
- (d) Reasons for these exhortations. The apostle knowing that he will not belong upon the earth wishes to give his testimony to the truth in Christ and His coming for he had seen His glory and had heard the voice of God from heaven testifying: "This is my beloved Son." The prophets also had testified to Christ. 1: 12-21.

II. WARNINGS AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS. Ch. 2.

- (a) As there were false prophets in days past so there are now. They have many followers who deny the Lord. 2: 1-3.

BIBLE STUDY BY BOOKS

(b) God will punish these evil teachers and deliver the godly as He did in the times of Noah and Lot. 2: 4-10.

(c) Description of the character, evil ways, influence and end of the false teachers. 2: 11-22.

III. DEFENSE OF CHRIST'S COMING AGAINST SCOFFERS. Ch. 3.

(a) In the last times there will come scoffers who will deny Christ's coming and taunt believers with the delay. 3: 1-6.

(b) But they are willingly ignorant that God has once before destroyed the world. He will again compass its destruction on account of the evil men in it. 3: 7.

(c) A day with the Lord is "as a thousand years" and He delays His coming that all may have opportunity to repent. But the day will come suddenly, when least expected. 3: 8-12.

(d) There will be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Closing exhortations and benediction. 3: 13-18.

L.

I, II AND III JOHN.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

This Epistle shows a close connection with the fourth Gospel; the standpoints of doctrine and the spirit, in which the author writes, are the same.

Place and Time. It is quite generally conceded that the place of writing was Ephesus and the time about the same as that of the fourth Gospel; during the latter part of John's life.

The Author. Although no name is attached to any one of the three letters, the writer is undoubtedly John the Apostle of Christ. It is supposed that John left the city of Jerusalem about 67 A. D. when large numbers of the people forsook the place in anticipation of the siege. Somewhere in the next two years during his exile on the Isle of Patmos he wrote the book of Revelation; the exile over there is well grounded evidence that he went to Ephesus and remained there until his death near the close of the century. At the time John settled in Ephesus and became the head of the church, the Christians must have been strong in numbers and influence. This church was founded by Paul about 55 A. D. and one of his epistles is addressed to it.

The Occasion of Writing. The letter is addressed

to no particular church and seems to be a general one intended for a number of churches for a certain specific purpose. Trouble had arisen in the churches of Asia from certain idle speculations and heresies which were doing harm. The questions turned on the nature of Christ; among them were the following: "Was Christ a mere man?" "Was the suffering Jesus to be separated from the sinless Christ?" "Was His human life a mere phantasmal semblance?" 2: 18; 4: 3; 5: 21; 2: 23; 2: 19.

Object: To set forth the true doctrine of Christ. The opening verses proclaim in the lofty tone of inspired authority, the incarnation of Christ, the eternal Word of God. 1: 1-4. "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God," (4: 5) "and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." 4: 3. "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ." 5: 6. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the Son of God." 5: 13. "The central object of all faith, the supreme counteraction of all unbelief is the Word made flesh; communion with Him and with the Father through Him, and with all mankind in Him is eternal life and all life apart from this communion is not life but death." The past and the future center in Christ. Christ has come in the flesh and entered into communion with us and partaken of our nature. God is light, life, love, truth, righteousness. If we would

enter into fellowship with God in these things we must enter into communion with Christ, the incarnation and manifestation of the divine Word, and partake of His nature. 1: 5; 3: 2; 2: 24-25; 2: 1; 3: 6; 3: 9.

Nothing can be clearer than John's testimony to the divine nature of Christ, God manifest in the flesh. 1: 1-4.

This epistle is also practical: John writes for particular classes who have special difficulties (2: 12-17); he lays strong emphasis upon brotherly love, a large charity and the doing of good deeds. 3: 9-24.

THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN.

They are all we have left of the private correspondence of the Apostle. They were evidently written at Ephesus and towards the close of John's life.

THE CONTENTS OF THE SECOND EPISTLE. This letter is addressed to the "elect lady." It is uncertain whether a church or a person is intended, each view has its strong advocates and it is possible to hold either interpretation without doing violence to the text. This is a friendly letter about a visit the Apostle has recently made; he commends the children of the lady who are walking in the truth; he points out the necessity of love and obedience to Christ and utters a warning against false teachers; he closes with the expressed hope of making another visit soon. There is much in common here with the first and third epistles.

THE CONTENTS OF THE THIRD EPISTLE: This let

ter is addressed to Gaius; it is not possible to identify him with other persons called by this name in the New Testament. The occasion of the letter was the kindness and hospitality which Gaius had shown to some evangelists who had come to the church where he was evidently a member. The Apostle had written to the church about their reception but one Diotrephes had stirred up such an opposition that they were rejected by the church. On their return to Ephesus John sent them back with this letter and the declaration in it that he would shortly come himself and institute a searching inquiry into the whole matter

ANALYSIS. I, II AND III JOHN.

I JOHN.

1. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-4.

The manifestation of the Word of God "in whom we have eternal life." The first four verses of this epistle correspond to the first eighteen verses of the gospel of John. In the epistle, the message (1: 5) which John heard of Him and gives to his hearers is that God is light and love. God is also shown to be truth, righteousness and life.

II. GOD IS LIGHT. 1: 5-2: 29.

God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 1: 5.

(a) What walking with God in the light means.

1. "Fellowship with Him" and "one with another" and "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." 1: 5-10.

2. Obedience to God's commandments. 2: 1-11.

(b) The person for whom and the purpose for which the Apostle writes. 2: 12-14.

(c) Things and persons to be avoided in walking with God in the light.

1. The love of the world tends to evil and will pass away.

"But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 2: 15-17.

2. Antichrist, apostates and deniers of Christ. 2: 18-23.

(d) Abiding in the light, in Christ is the only place of safety. In Him we have eternal life. 2: 24-29.

III. GOD IS LOVE. 3: 1-5: 21.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." 3: 1.

(a) We are called sons through the love of the Father. 3: 1-2.

(b) The sons of God and the sons of the devil are made manifest by their deeds. 3: 3-13.

(c) The proof of sonship is in the fact that we love God, the brethren and do right deeds. 3: 14-24.

(d) Warnings not to believe every spirit; for there are many false prophets in the world; the test is in their confession or denial of Christ, that He has come in the flesh. 4: 1-6.

(e) Exhortation to believers to love one another and to be like God, who in His love "sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him." 4: 7-21.

(f) The victory over the world can be gained only through love and belief in Jesus Christ, who came by "water and by blood" and for whom we have the witness of God. In Christ we not only overcome the world but have eternal life. 5: 1-21.

II JOHN.

SALUTATION. 1: 1-3. To the "elect lady" or church.

THANKSGIVING that so many walk in the truth. 1: 4. The occasion of the letter is also found in this fourth verse.

EXHORTATION to love and obedience. 1: 5-6.

WARNING against many deceivers who teach false doctrine about Christ. 1: 7-9.

EXHORTATION to watchfulness. 1. That the truth be not lost or transgressed. 2. Against fellowship with those who are false teachers. 1: 10-11.

CONCLUSION. 1: 12-13.

III JOHN.

SALUTATION. 1: 1-2. "Unto the well beloved Gaius."

THANKSGIVING for the Christian hospitality shown by Gaius to the brethren who were working as evangelists. 1: 3-8.

THE UNCHRISTIAN SPIRIT and hostility shown by Diotrophes is condemned. 1: 9-10.

EXHORTATION and moral. 1: ~~11~~-12.

CONCLUSION. 1: 13-14.

LI.

JUDE.

CONTENTS AND OCCASION OF THE EPISTLE.

Jude clearly states his object in verse 3: "to exhort his readers that they should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." The occasion of the letter is found in verse 4, where he gives a graphic picture of the condition of affairs. There were certain evil members who "used the freedom of the Christian church from the literal obligation of the Mosaic law as a cloak for vice"; going further they denied "our Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." In the handling of his subject the author develops a careful plan.

To Whom Written. From the illustrations used: The Israelites in Egypt and the wilderness; Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, Korah, etc., it is quite evident that the epistle was written to Jewish Christians in Palestine. In style the writer is like one of the old prophets. There is a marked resemblance in a number of points between this epistle and II Peter.

The Author; Time and Place of Writing. The writer is Jude, the brother of James. Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3. He did not at first believe in Christ but

joined the Apostles after the resurrection. Acts 1: 13. There is no evidence in regard to the place or time of writing. It is thought that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem A. D. 70, or that Jude would have mentioned this event amongst the examples of punishment of "corporate wickedness." 1: 5-7. The book is found in the earlier lists of books which constituted the New Testament canon.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1: 1-4.

(a) Salutation. 1: 1-2.

(b) Subject. Contention for the faith. 1: 3.

(c) Cause. Men who have crept into the churches leading evil lives and "denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." 1: 4.

II. WARNINGS. 1: 5-19.

(a) Three examples of God's punishment of "corporate wickedness." 1: 5-7.

1. The Israelites who disobeyed God in the wilderness.

2. The angels who kept not their first estate.

3. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

(b) Application of these examples to those who now trouble the churches. 1: 8-10.

(c) Three examples of "individual wickedness" which called forth the Divine vengeance. 1: 11.

1. Cain. 2. Balaam. 3. Korah.

(d) Descriptions of the present evil men corresponding to the last examples. 1. What they are by nature. 2. In thought and language. 3. In conduct. 1: 12-19.

III. EXHORTATIONS. 1: 20-25.

(a) To believers in Christ to build up themselves in the most holy faith. 1. By prayer. 2. Love. 3. Hope. 1: 20-21.

(b) To treat the evil doers "making a difference." 1. Some

with gentleness. 2. Others with "strong remedies." 3. But reprobating the sins of all. 1: 22-23.

(c) Doxology. Believers are commended to Him who is able to keep them from falling away. "To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever." 1: 24-25.

LII.

REVELATION.

CONTENTS.

Only a very brief survey of the contents of this book can be given here. The plan of the revelation of John is remarkable for its unity. The action is grandly sustained from the beginning to the close. It is an easy task to make a list and give a description of the visions; the problem is to find the meaning of them.

THERE ARE THREE WELL-KNOWN SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION:

The Praeterist, the Historical, the Futurist.

I. *The Praeterist* maintains that the prophecies and visions referred to the "history of the Jewish people down to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the history of pagan Rome"; hence, at least, in their primary intention, they have all been fulfilled.

II. *The Futurist* claims that the events to which the predictions relate are immediately to follow the second coming of Christ or precede it. The futurist usually interprets literally.

III. *The Historical or Continuous*. (This school probably embraces the great majority of the commentators.) This view is that some of the predictions

have been fulfilled; some are in process of fulfillment and others are yet to be fulfilled.

Objection has been made to these three schools of interpretation because so much is made of the time element. Attention has been called to the fact that Christ warned His disciples against trying to fix definitely the time and season of His coming again and the end of the world. Matthew (24:3 and 36) Paul (2 Thess. 2:2) and Peter followed the Lord in this caution. Peter said that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day," when writing about the subject. 2 Pet. 3:4-10. Another class of interpreters, seeking to get rid of this difficulty of the time element, read the book "as a representation of ideas rather than events" and emphasize its moral and spiritual aspects. In order to grasp the significance of this revelation of John it is necessary to take all of these systems of interpretation under consideration. It seems to be a fact that the visions of the book have found counterparts in the world's history; an able Biblical scholar says: "The beast (13:1; 17:3) was the Roman Empire; the seven heads were seven emperors; the woman (17:3) was the city of Rome; the ten horns were Imperial governors, (13:1; 17:3-12.) But the lamb triumphed over persecuting Rome." If space permitted it would be interesting to show how many times since the fall of that great city, historical conditions have apparently been plainly met; there are those who claim to know exactly what every vision means. But the principles of good and evil are in constant conflict.

The drama has been played in one age to be enacted in the next. Waves of trial, judgment and victory have passed and will again pass over the church. There are great moral and spiritual crises which arise in every nation and have to be decided by eternal principles. A wrong decision and the trumpets of God's wrath are sounded; the vials of woes are emptied; the seal of doom is set to national life and prosperity. A right decision, God comes in graciousness and mercy; the song of the triumph of the Lamb is heard and the land smiles in peace and plenty under the blessing of Almighty God.

But the teaching of the book seems to be very clear on the point that there will be an end to all this trial and conflict; then on a grander scale than we now think, all these visions may be fulfilled. There can be no doubt about the issue. God and the Lamb must triumph. The book opens with a song of victory; it closes with a glorious vision of a magnificent city where dwell the redeemed. "And the Spirit and the bride say come. And let him that heareth, say come, and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

AUTHOR, TIME AND PLACE.

The generally accepted opinion of the church in regard to this book is that it was written by John, the apostle, during his exile on the Isle of Patmos about 68 A. D. It is one of the earliest books of the New Testament quoted with the author's name.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTRODUCTION. 1:1-3:22.

- (a) Title and purpose of this book. 1:1-3.
- (b) The vision of Jesus Christ. "The Alpha and Omega." 1:4-20.
- (c) The messages to the seven churches. Ch. 2-3.

II. THE REVELATION. 4:1-22:21.

(a) *The Appearance of God upon His throne.* Ch. 4. *The appearance of Christ as the Lamb "in the midst of the throne" who is found worthy to open the book "sealed with seven seals." The song of triumph to God and the Lamb.* Ch. 5. This vision remains constant throughout the book.

(b) *The Seven Seals Opened.* Ch. 6-8:1.

In chapter seven is an interlude between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, in which the elect of Israel and a great multitude which no man could number are sealed. "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

(c) *The Seven Trumpets Sounded and their Woes.* 8:2-11:19.

1. Before the sounding of the trumpets is the prelude of an angel offering incense with the prayers of the saints. 8:3-5.

2. Between the sixth and seventh trumpets there occur three incidents: The eating of the little book; the measuring of the Temple; the prophecy of the two witnesses. 10:1-11:14.

(d) *"The Seven Mystic Figures."* Ch. 12-14.

"The signs in heaven and earth, the heads of the kingdom of God and Satan, Christ and Anti-Christ, Triumph of Christ."

1. A woman clothed with the sun. 2. A man child. 3. A great red dragon. Ch. 12. 4. A beast out of the sea. 13:1-10. 5. A beast out of the earth. 13:11-18. 6. The Lamb on Mt. Zion, the song of triumph. 14:1-13. 7. The Son of Man on the cloud, the judgment of the earth. 14:14-20.

(e) *The Seven Vials Poured out and their plagues.* Ch. 15-16.

1. A song of triumph (Ch. 15) before the vials are emptied.

2. An interlude between the sixth and seventh vials; the

spirits of devils gather the kings of the earth to the battle of Armageddon. 16:13-16.

(f) *Final Victory of Christ.* Ch. 17-22.

1. The Fall of Babylon, which symbolized the world power of evil. Ch. 17-18. The triumph song over the destruction of this evil city; the glory of God; the bridegroom. 19:1-10.

2. The fall of Satan, "the hostile spiritual power." Christ, the victor. 19:11-21.

3. The judgment. Ch. 20. The doom of the unbelieving; the glory of believers in Christ.

4. The new heavens and the new earth; the splendor of the new Jerusalem; the blessedness of the future state of the redeemed in Christ; the Temple of God; the exaltation of the Lamb. Ch. 21-22. The gracious invitation. 22:17.

